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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Supplement

RULES COMPENDIUM™

Edited by Chris Sims

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

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Introduction

The book you hold in your hands is the definitive guide for how to play the 3.5 revision of the Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game. Years in the making, it gathers resources from a wide variety of supplements, rules errata, and rules clarifications to provide an authoritative guide for playing the D&D game. It updates and elucidates the rules, as well as expanding on them in ways that make it more fun and easier to play. When a preexisting core book or supplement differs with the rules herein, *Rules Compendium* is meant to take precedence. If you have a question on how to play D&D at the table, this book is meant to answer that question.

Rules Compendium isn't just a compilation of the rules you need to play D&D. It's also a celebration of the 3rd Edition of the world's most popular roleplaying game. Those who've worked on the game in past years have taken the time to comment on the rules and share experiences with you in these pages. You'll find anecdotes, house rules, history, and more in these asides and essays. If the rules in this book don't show you anything new, the designers, developers, and editors who commented here just might.

RULES BASICS

The D&D rules have some essential assumptions.

ADJUDICATION

Essential to the D&D game is the Dungeon Master (DM). The DM is the referee and storyteller for the game, as well as the judge when the rules don't cover a particular topic.

Let's face it: No set of rules can cover every possible circumstance in a game meant to mimic life in a fantasy world. The rules clear up as much as possible, assuming the DM can make a judgment in a situation that the rules don't cover or that they don't cover adequately. DMs are expected to use knowledge of existing rules, common sense, real-world knowledge, and a sense of fun when dealing with such special cases. Knowledge of the existing rules is key, because the rules often do cover similar cases or combine to make such judgment calls unnecessary. It's not always true, but you often can do or at least try something the rules fail to directly forbid, as long as the DM thinks doing so is reasonable. For example, the rules don't come out and say that a Medium creature threatens all squares within 10 feet while wielding a reach weapon and wearing spiked gauntlets. However, it's appropriate to assume the creature does just that.

The DM is also there to keep the game moving. Doing so might require expedient rulings that later prove troublesome or just plain incorrect. That's okay. Players and DMs make mistakes, and these mistakes tend to average out over time. It's better for everyone's fun if the game just keeps going rather than devolving into a rules argument or going back to revisit the round in which a mistake was made.

CORE MECHANIC

Whenever your character attempts an act that has some chance of failure, you do this:

- Roll a d20.
- Add any relevant modifiers.
- Compare the result to a target number known as a Difficulty Class (DC).

If the result equals or exceeds the DC, your character succeeds and garners the benefit of so doing. If the result is lower than the DC, your character fails and suffers the consequences of failure.

MATH

When doing math in D&D, some conventions are in effect unless a specific rule or description says otherwise.

Rounding Fractions

If you wind up with a fraction, round down, even if the fraction is one-half or larger. As detailed elsewhere in this book, certain rolls, such as damage and hit points, have a minimum of 1.

Multiplying

Sometimes a special rule makes you multiply a number or a die roll. When two or more multipliers apply to any abstract value such as die roll modifiers, combine them into a single multiple, with each extra multiple adding 1 less than its value to the first multiple. Thus, a double (×2) and a double (×2) applied to the same number results in a triple (×3, because $2 + 1 = 3$). Three doubles results in a quadruple (×4 because $2 + 1 + 1 = 4$). When applying multipliers to what are considered real-world values (such as weight or distance), the normal rules of math apply instead.

ORDER OF RULES APPLICATION

The D&D game assumes a specific order of rules application: General to specific to exception. A general rule is a basic guideline, but a more specific rule takes precedence when applied to the same activity. For instance, a monster description is more specific than any general rule about monsters, so the description takes precedence. An exception is a particular kind of specific rule that contradicts or breaks another rule (general or specific). The Improved Disarm feat, for instance, provides an exception to the rule that an attacker provokes an attack of opportunity from the defender he's trying to disarm (see Disarm, page 45).

TIME

Time works for characters in the imaginary world of D&D like it does in the real world. Minutes, hours, days, and months can pass as the characters explore and grow in power. Only during certain situations is the measure of time more precise. Then the round is used.

Round

Combat is played in rounds. Each round represents 6 seconds in the game world, regardless of how long it takes to play out the round. A minute contains 10 rounds. See Initiative, page 70, for more on beginning combat.

Ability Score Loss

Some attacks deal damage to an ability score in the form of ability damage or ability drain. Ability damage must be healed naturally or magically, and ability drain must be restored by magic.

A few effects impose an effective ability score reduction, which is different from ability score loss. Any such reduction disappears at the end of the effect's duration, and the ability score immediately returns to its former value.

The capacity that some creatures have to damage or drain ability scores is a supernatural one, requiring some sort of attack. Such creatures don't damage or drain passively, such as when enemies strike them, even if an enemy attacks using unarmed attacks or natural weapons.

ABILITY DAMAGE

When an attack damages an ability score, it temporarily reduces that score in a living creature (any creature not of the construct, deathless, or undead type). If a creature can damage an ability score, that creature's descriptive text describes how it does so and which ability is damaged, as well as the amount of that damage. On a critical hit, an attack that deals ability damage deals twice the indicated amount of damage—if the damage is expressed as a die range, roll twice as many dice.

HEALING ABILITY DAMAGE

If, during a 24-hour period, a creature gets a full 8 hours of sleep or equivalent rest (depending on the creature's race), that creature recovers 1 ability score point per damaged ability score. Any significant interruption, such as combat, during the rest prevents healing. Complete bed rest for the entire 24 hours doubles this rate. Undertaking even light activity during a 24-hour period prevents this additional healing.

Long-Term Care

Someone who has the Heal skill can help another creature double its recovery of ability score points by succeeding on a DC 15 Heal check. A healer can tend up to six patients. Providing this sort of care is light activity and requires medical supplies. You can't give long-term care to yourself.

ABILITY DRAIN

When an attack drains an ability score, it permanently reduces that score in a living creature (any creature not of the construct, deathless, or undead type). If a creature can drain an ability score, that creature's descriptive text describes how it does so and which ability is drained, as well as the amount of that drain. On a critical hit, an attack that causes ability drain deals twice the indicated amount of drain—if the drain is expressed as a die range, roll twice as many dice.

Unless otherwise noted in the creature's description, a creature gains 5 temporary hit points (10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains an ability score, no matter how many points it drains. Temporary hit points gained in this fashion last for up to 1 hour. (See Temporary Hit Points, page 72.)

Some ability drain attacks allow a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 draining creature's racial HD + draining creature's Cha modifier; the exact DC is given in the creature's descriptive text). If no saving throw is mentioned, none is allowed.

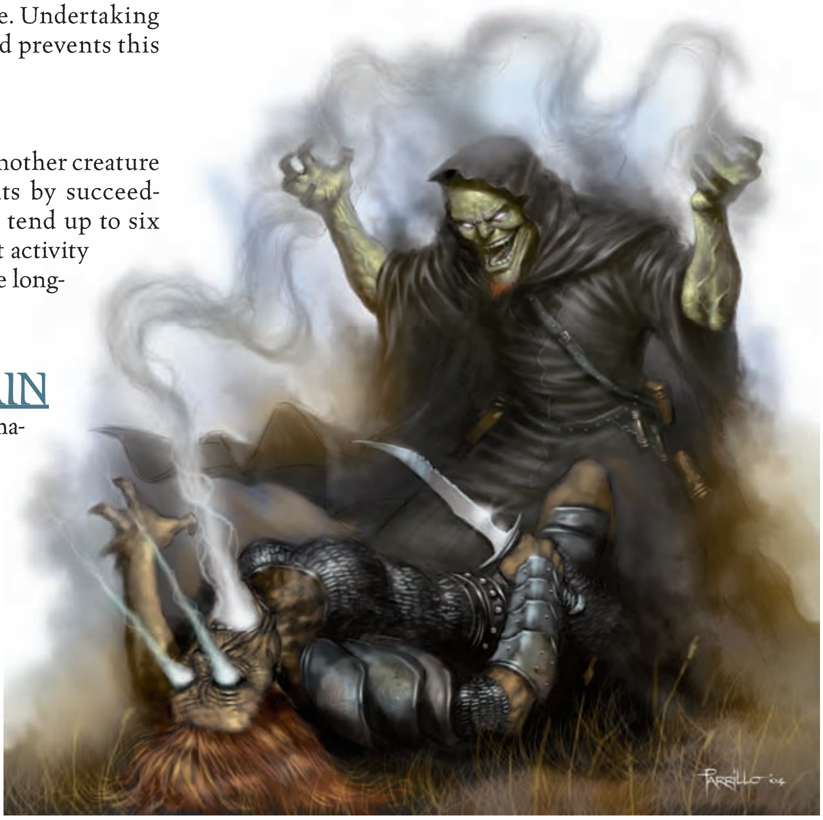
A *restoration* spell can restore drained ability score points.

LOSING ALL POINTS

Keeping track of negative ability score points is never necessary. A creature's ability score can't drop below 0. While any loss is debilitating, losing all points in an ability score can be devastating.

- Strength 0 means that a creature can't move at all. It lies helpless on the ground.
- Dexterity 0 means that a creature can't move at all. It stands motionless, rigid, and helpless.
- Constitution 0 means that a creature is dead.
- Intelligence 0 means that a creature can't think and is unconscious in a comalike stupor, helpless.
- Wisdom 0 means that a creature is lapsed into a deep sleep filled with nightmares, helpless.
- Charisma 0 means that a creature is lapsed into a catatonic, comalike stupor, helpless.

Having a score of 0 in an ability is different from having no ability score whatsoever. A creature that has no score in a certain ability treats that attribute as a nonability (see page 105).



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Action Types

During a normal round, you can perform a standard action and a move action, or you can perform a full-round action. You can also perform an immediate action or a swift action, and as many free actions as your DM allows. You can always take a move action in place of a standard action. Activities can also be undertaken that are parts of other actions but not actions in and of themselves. In some situations, such as during a surprise round, your activity, and thereby your actions, might be restricted.

Free, full-round, immediate, move, standard, and swift are action types. An action's type tells you how long the action takes to perform within the framework of the combat round. It also tells you how movement is treated.

See Movement, page 90, for more on movement. The Actions in Combat table, page 8, details many possible actions and their parameters.

STANDARD ACTION

A standard action allows you to perform an act that takes a substantial amount of time. The most common type of standard action is a single melee or ranged attack. Other common standard actions include casting a spell, concentrating to maintain an active spell, activating a magic item, and using a special ability.

MOVE ACTION

A move action allows you to move your speed or perform an action that takes a similar amount of time. You can move your speed, climb one-quarter of your speed, draw or stow a weapon or other item, stand up, pick up an object, or perform some equivalent action.

You can take a move action in place of a standard action. For instance, rather than moving your speed and attacking, you could stand up and move your speed (two move actions), put away a weapon and climb one-quarter of your speed (two move actions), or pick up an item and stow it in your backpack (two move actions).

If you move no actual distance in a round—commonly because you have swapped your move for one or more equivalent actions, such as standing up—you can usually take one 5-foot step before, during, or after the other actions you're taking.

FULL-ROUND ACTION

A full-round action consumes almost all your effort during a round. Before, during, or after a full-round action in which you don't otherwise move, you can usually take a 5-foot step. The most common type of full-round action is a full attack, which allows you to make multiple melee or ranged attacks in a single round.

Some full-round actions don't allow you to take a 5-foot step. Other full-round actions can be taken as standard actions in situations when you're limited to performing only a standard action during your turn, such as during a surprise round.

FREE ACTION

Free actions consume a very small amount of time and effort. Their impact is so minor that they're considered free. You can perform one or more free actions during your turn. However, the DM can put reasonable limits on what you can really do for free.

SWIFT ACTION

A swift action consumes a very small amount of time, but it represents a larger expenditure of effort than a free action. You can take a swift action any time during your turn, but you can perform only one swift action per turn.

IMMEDIATE ACTION

An immediate action consumes a tiny amount of time. However, unlike a swift action, an immediate action can be performed at any time during a round, even when it isn't your turn. Using an immediate action on your turn counts as your swift action for that turn. If you use an immediate action when it isn't your turn, you can't use another immediate action or a swift action until after your next turn. You can't use an immediate action when you're flat-footed.

NOT AN ACTION

Some activities are so minor that they aren't even considered free actions. They literally don't take any time at all to do and are considered an inherent part of doing something else.

RESTRICTED ACTIVITY

A few situations make you unable to take a full round's worth of actions. In such cases, you're allowed to take only a single standard action or a single move action, along with allowed swift, immediate, and free actions. You can't take a full-round action and finish that action, but you can start or complete a full-round action by using a standard action.

BIRTH OF NEW "FREE" ACTIONS

Halfway into 3rd Edition, while designing *Miniatures Handbook*, we realized that free actions hid a potential smorgasbord of cool new mechanics. We subdivided the free actions into immediate actions (a free action you can take when it isn't your turn), and swift actions (a free action you can take when it's your turn). However, it wasn't until *Expanded Psionics Handbook*'s development that the bulb fully brightened. The concept that swift and immediate actions could serve as one more resource available to a player opened up new vistas of possibility, expanding options in the game.

—Bruce R. Cordell, designer

Actions in Combat

The following table summarizes acts that can be undertaken during combat. It also shows the action type required and whether an activity provokes attacks of opportunity (AoO). The page of this book where a related entry contains further details is also noted. If no page is indicated, the act is defined in the notes following the table or is self-explanatory.

ACTIONS IN COMBAT

Standard Action	AoO[1]	Page
Activate magic item		
Command[2]	No	84
Manipulation[3]	Yes	84
Apply oil	Yes	84
Drink potion	Yes	84
Mental[2]	No	84
Scroll[2]	Yes	87
Spell trigger (such as a wand or staff)[2]	No	85
Aid another in combat[4]	Maybe	10
Assess opponent (Sense Motive)	No	68
Attack (melee)	No	16
Attack (ranged)	Yes	16
Attack (unarmed)	Yes*	16
Bull rush[5]	Yes	23
Cast spell (1 standard action casting time)	Yes	133
Cast touch spell (1 standard action casting time) and touch one target	Yes	126
Concentrate to maintain active spell	No	132
Demoralize opponent (Intimidate)	No	68
Dismiss spell	No	127
Draw hidden weapon	No	117
Escape grapple or pin (Escape Artist)	No	61
Feint	No	54
Free another from fascinated condition	No	35
Light torch with tindertwig	Yes	—
Lower spell resistance	No	130
Make dying friend stable (DC 15 Heal check)	Yes	73
Move grapple[6]	Yes	61
Overrun[5, 7]	Yes	108
Ready (triggers standard action)	No	110
Start or complete full-round action[8]	Maybe	—
Throw grappling hook (Use Rope)	Yes	50
Total defense	No	55
Turning check	No	146
Use spell-like ability[9]	Yes	118
Use supernatural ability[9]	No	119
Use whip	Yes	—

Move Action	AoO[1]	Page
Control nonwar mount (DC 20 Ride check)	Yes	88
Crawl 5 feet[10]	Yes	91
Direct or redirect active spell	No	134
Draw light weapon while grappling[11]	No	61
Draw weapon[12]	No	—
Hide after sniping	No	92
Load hand crossbow, light crossbow, or sling[13]	Yes	—
Make active Listen check or Spot check	No	114
Mount or dismount	No	88
Move[14]	Yes	90
Note the direction of scent	No	115
Open or close door	No	—
Pick up item	Yes	—
Push or pull heavy object	Yes	47
Ready or loose shield[15]	No	—
Retrieve stored item	Yes	—
Sheathe weapon	Yes	—
Spur mount	No	89
Stand from prone	Yes	35
Switch hands with an item	No	—

Full-Round Action	AoO[1]	Page
Activate magic item		
Administer potion to unconscious creature	Yes	84
Apply oil to unconscious creature	Yes	84
Cast metamagic spell spontaneously	Yes	139
Cast spell (1 round casting time)[16]	Yes	133
Cast touch spell (1 standard action casting time) and touch two to six allies	Yes	126
Charge[17]	No	27
Control nonwar mount (on failed DC 20 Ride check)	Yes	89
Coup de grace	Yes	62
Escape from net or entangling spell (DC 20 Escape Artist check)	Yes	—
Extinguish flames	No	48
Full attack	No	17
Light torch	Yes	—
Load heavy crossbow bolt or repeating crossbow bolt case[18]	Yes	—
Lock or unlock weapon in locked gauntlet[19]	Yes	—
Open lock	Yes	44
Plug ears with soundproof material	No	48
Prepare oil with fuse[20]	Yes	—
Retrieve spell component while grappling[21]	No	61
Run	Yes	93
Search 5 cubic feet	Yes	114
Secure grappling hook (DC 10 Use Rope check)	Yes	50
Trample	Yes	101
Withdraw[17]	No	94

Swift Action	AoO[1]	Page
Cast quickened spell	No	125
Cast spell (1 swift action casting time)	No	125
Use quickened spell-like ability	No	118

Immediate Action	AoO[1]	Page
Cast spell (1 immediate action casting time)	No	124

Free Action	AoO[1]	Page
Cease concentration on spell	No	133
Draw ammunition	No	—
Drop item[22]	No	—
Drop prone[23]	No	—
Fast mount or dismount (DC 20 Ride check)	No	—
Fight while war mount also attacks (DC 10 Ride check)	No	89
Load repeating crossbow bolt from case[18]	No	—
Prepare spell components[24]	No	124
Release grappled or pinned opponent	No	61
Speak[25]	No	—
Stand from prone (DC 35 Tumble check)	Yes	94
Use extraordinary ability[9]	No	118

No Action	AoO[1]	Page
5-foot step	No	90
Attack of opportunity[26]	Maybe	18
Cover from mount (DC 15 Ride check)	No	88
Delay	No	43
Duel of wills (Intimidate)	No	68

No Action	AoO[1]	Page
Fight defensively[27]	No	55
Guide mount with knees (DC 5 Ride check)	No	88
Identify spell being cast (Spellcraft check, DC 15 + spell level)	No	138
Make Concentration check	No	33
Make passive Listen check or Spot check	No	114
Stay in saddle (DC 5 Ride check)	No	88

Action Type Varies	AoO[1]	Page
Aid another on a check[4]	Maybe	31
Disarm[28]	Yes*	45
Grapple[28]	Yes*	60
Sunder weapon[28]	Yes*	142
Sunder object[28, 29]	Maybe*	142
Trip[28]	Yes*	145
Use feat[30]	Maybe	—
Use skill[31]	Maybe	—

1 This column indicates whether an act provokes attacks of opportunity when it is performed in a threatened square. An asterisk (*) after a "Yes" or "Maybe" entry in this column indicates an that the action provokes an attack of opportunity only from the target of the action. Even if this column reads "No," you usually provoke an attack of opportunity if you move out of a threatened square. You usually provoke an attack of opportunity from an opponent when you enter that foe's space.

2 Activating this sort of magic item takes the same amount of time as casting the spell the item's power duplicates. If the power doesn't duplicate a spell, activating the item is a standard action unless its description says otherwise. See note 16 for spells that have 1-round casting times.

3 The item's description might dictate another type of action, in which case the description takes precedence.

4 If you aid someone who is performing an action that would normally provoke attacks of opportunity, then aid another provokes attacks of opportunity.

5 This special attack provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for the movement involved. The attacker also provokes an attack of opportunity from the defender upon entering the defender's space.

6 Provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for movement, not for the required grapple check.

7 You can attempt an overrun as a standard action taken during your movement. This is an exception to the rule that you can't take a standard action during movement. If your target moves out of your way, you don't use a standard action. You can choose another target to overrun if you have enough movement to make it to that target and end your movement in a legal space.

8 This standard action lets you start a full-round action, which you complete in the following round by using another standard action. If you undertake an act that would normally provoke attacks of opportunity, then this standard action provokes attacks of opportunity. You can't use this standard action to start or complete a full attack, charge, run, or withdraw.

9 A special ability takes the indicated action to perform unless the ability's description says otherwise. A spell-like ability that duplicates a spell with a casting time of less than 1 standard action has the same casting time as the duplicated spell.

10 A limbless creature, such as a snake, that crawls as its normal movement can crawl at its normal speed.

11 Requires a successful grapple check.

12 If you have a base attack bonus of +1 or higher, you can combine this action with moving your speed. Drawing a weapon applies to any weaponlike item, such as a wand, rod, or staff, within easy reach. An item that is stored or out of easy reach must be retrieved as a stored item. If you have the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, you can draw two light or one-handed weapons in the time it normally takes to draw one. Wands are light, and rods are one-handed.

13 Loading requires two hands.

14 Moving can include using skills such as Balance, Climb, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Swim, and Tumble.

15 If you have a base attack bonus of +1 or higher, you can combine this act with moving your speed. Readying a shield means strapping it to an arm to use it. Loosing a shield means taking it off your arm and dropping it.

16 Unlike with a normal full-round action, which resolves during the same turn it's taken, a spell that has a casting time of 1 round resolves just before the beginning of its caster's next turn.

17 If you're unable to take a full round's worth of actions on your turn, such as during a surprise round, you can charge or withdraw as a standard action. In this case, you can move only up to your speed rather than up to double your speed.

18 Loading requires two hands. A full-round action is required only to load a new case of bolts onto a repeating crossbow. Loading a bolt from a case already attached to a repeating crossbow is a free action.

19 While the gauntlet is locked, you can't use the hand wearing it. You can still cast spells that have somatic components if your other hand is free.

20 This includes putting a fuse in the oil. Lighting that fuse works like lighting a torch. Oil so lit has only a 50% chance of igniting once thrown but otherwise functions as alchemist's fire (*PH* 128).

21 Doesn't require a successful grapple check.

22 You can drop any carried item, including a shield you're carrying (not wearing and gaining the shield bonus from), in your space or an adjacent square.

23 You drop prone in your space.

24 Unless the component is an extremely large or awkward item. Such an item must be retrieved as a stored item.

25 You can speak even when it isn't your turn. Long speeches aren't free actions.

26 If you make an attack that would normally provoke attacks of opportunity, then the attack of opportunity provokes attacks of opportunity.

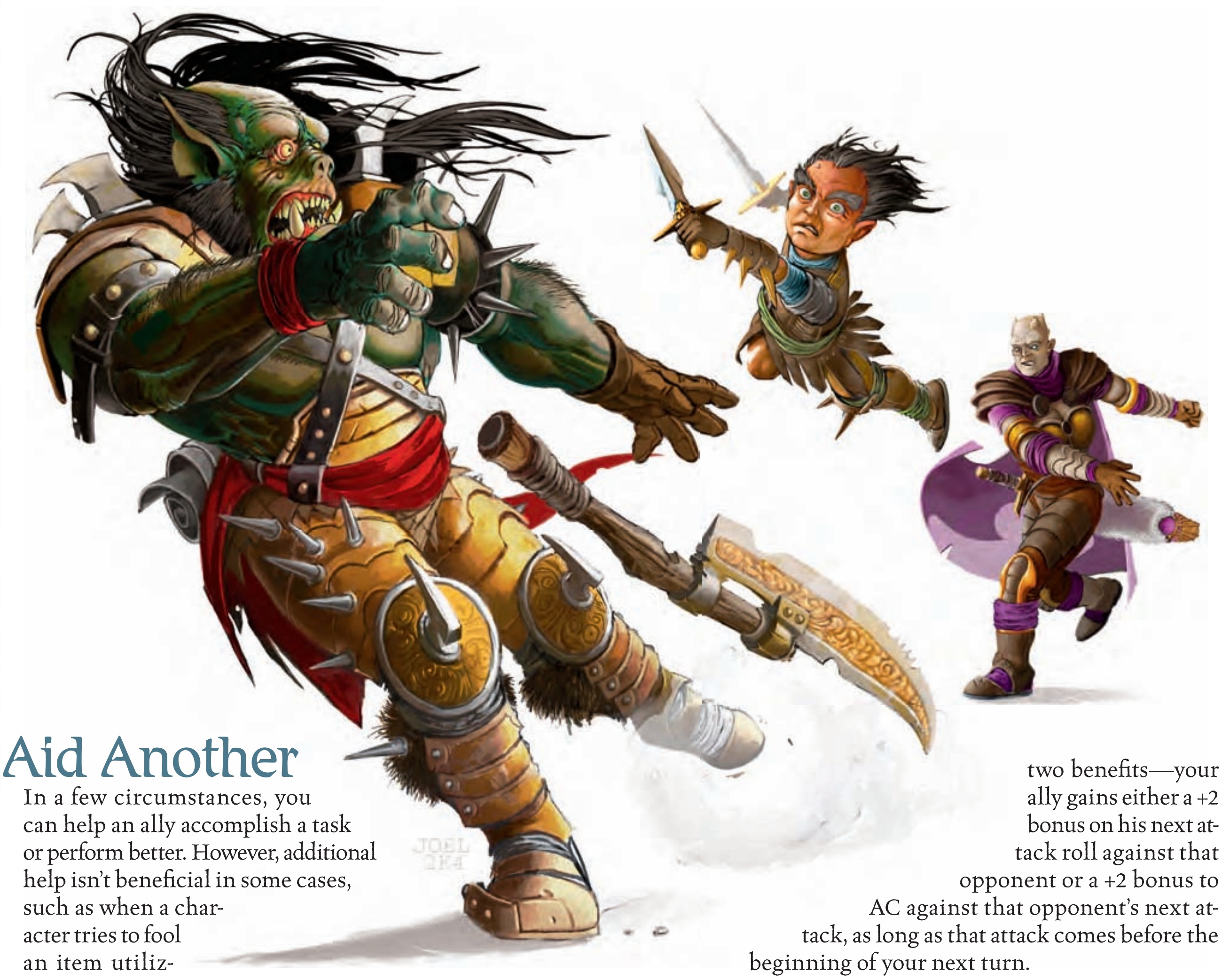
27 You can fight defensively as part of an attack or full attack.

28 This attack form substitutes for a melee attack. As such, it can be used once in an attack or charge, or one or more times during a full attack. It can even be used as an attack of opportunity.

29 If the object is being held, carried, or worn by a creature, yes, but only from that creature. If not, no.

30 A feat's description defines the action required and the effect. Using a feat provokes attacks of opportunity if the action involved does, or if the feat's description indicates that using it provokes attacks of opportunity.

31 The skill's description defines the action required and the effect. Disable Device, Heal, Open Lock, Search, and Use Rope provoke attacks of opportunity. Skills that involve movement provoke attacks of opportunity as appropriate for the movement involved in using the skill.



Illus. by J. Thomas

Aid Another

In a few circumstances, you can help an ally accomplish a task or perform better. However, additional help isn't beneficial in some cases, such as when a character tries to fool an item utilizing Use Magic Device. In other situations, only a limited number of characters can help at once, such as when breaking down a door or turning a winch that has one small handle. DMs can limit how aid another is used as they see fit for given conditions. When multiple creatures can aid the same ally, the bonuses they provide stack.

If you aid someone performing an act that would normally provoke attacks of opportunity, then the act of aiding another provokes attacks of opportunity in the same way.

AID ANOTHER FOR ABILITY CHECKS

You can help an ally achieve success on an ability check by using aid another, taking the same amount of time that the ability check normally requires. To do so, you make the same kind of ability check, simulating a cooperative effort. You must roll for the check—you can't take 10 or 20. If the result of your check is 10 or higher, the ally you're helping receives a +2 bonus on the ability check. You're essentially providing favorable conditions.

AID ANOTHER IN COMBAT

In melee combat, you can help an ally attack or defend by taking this standard action to distract or interfere with an opponent. If you're in position to make a melee attack against an opponent that is engaging an ally in melee combat, you can attempt to aid that ally. To do so, make an attack roll against AC 10. If you succeed, you can choose to give your ally one of two benefits—your ally gains either a +2 bonus on his next attack roll against that opponent or a +2 bonus to AC against that opponent's next attack, as long as that attack comes before the beginning of your next turn.

AID ANOTHER FOR SKILL CHECKS

You can help an ally achieve success on a skill check by using aid another. In cases when a skill restricts who can achieve certain results, you can't use aid another to grant a bonus on a task that your character couldn't achieve alone. A character who doesn't have the trapfinding class feature, for instance, can't use aid another to help a rogue on a Disable Device check to find a magic trap.

When you're able to aid another on a skill check, you do so by making the same kind of skill check, taking the same amount of time that the skill check normally requires. You must roll for the check—you can't take 10 or 20. If the result of your check is 10 or higher, the ally you're helping receives a +2 bonus on the skill check.

Expert Assistance

If you have 5 or more ranks in a skill you're using to aid another, you can grant a higher bonus. For every 10 points your check result exceeds 10, the circumstance bonus increases by 1. To determine the circumstance bonus quickly, simply divide the helper's check result by 10, round down, and add 1.

At the DM's option, this rule can also be extended to using the aid another action in combat to improve an ally's attack roll or AC. Any character who has a base attack bonus of +5 or higher can grant a greater bonus on an ally's attack roll or AC as described above.

Antimagic

An *antimagic field* spell or effect suppresses magic, but it doesn't dispel that magic. Once a magical effect is no longer affected by antimagic, the magic returns. Spells that still have part of their duration left begin functioning again, magic items are once again useful, and so forth. Two antimagic areas in the same place don't cancel each other, nor do they stack. An antimagic effect interacts with several game elements in different ways.

Illus. by E. Polak

CREATURES

Constructs, elementals, outsiders, and corporeal undead still function in an antimagic area. Their special abilities are affected by the antimagic as detailed below.

A big creature whose space is partially within an antimagic area can choose to attack from a square not within the area, thereby suffering no adverse effects from the antimagic. Its attacks and abilities are affected by the antimagic if it attacks into the antimagic area or uses an ability on a foe within the antimagic area.

Summoned creatures of any type disappear if they enter an antimagic area. Incorporeal creatures do the same. These creatures reappear in the same spot once the antimagic effect goes away, unless they were summoned by an effect whose duration has expired—see Spells, below.

MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items that have continuous effects don't function in an antimagic area, but their effects aren't canceled. This includes the enhancement bonus provided by magic armaments. In an antimagic area, for instance, the contents of a *bag of holding* are unavailable, but neither spill out nor disappear forever.

A magic weapon used to attack from inside an antimagic area, or one used to attack a creature inside an antimagic area, gains none of the benefits of its magic properties. Those properties are suppressed because of the weapon's interaction with the antimagic area. If neither the attacker nor the target is inside the antimagic area, the attack resolves normally with reference to the weapon's magic properties.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

No supernatural ability or spell-like ability works in an antimagic area. Their effects are affected like spells (see below). Extraordinary abilities work normally.

SPELLS

Spells don't function in an antimagic area, but an antimagic area doesn't block line of effect. If a spell's point of origin is inside an antimagic area, that spell is entirely suppressed. When a spell's point of origin is located outside an antimagic area, but part of that spell's area overlaps the antimagic area, that spell's effect is suppressed where the two areas overlap. Time elapsed within an antimagic area still counts against a spell's duration.

If an instantaneous spell is entirely suppressed, that spell is effectively canceled. (It's suppressed, and its duration instantaneously expires.) An instantaneous area spell is only entirely suppressed and effectively canceled if its point of origin is within the antimagic area. Otherwise it works like any other area spell that has a point of origin outside the antimagic area—only where its area overlaps the antimagic area is its effect is suppressed (and effectively canceled).

A *wall of force, prismatic wall,* or *prismatic sphere* isn't affected by antimagic. *Break enchantment, dispel magic,* and *greater dispel magic* spells don't dispel antimagic. *Mordenkainen's disjunction* has a 1% chance per caster level of destroying an *antimagic field.* If the *antimagic field* survives the *disjunction,* no items within it are disjoined.

ANTIMAGIC RAMIFICATIONS

Antimagic seems like a straightforward concept; magic works, or it doesn't. But antimagic can be troublesome.

On the design side of the equation, it requires us to tag effects as spell-like, supernatural, or extraordinary. To me, the division between spell-like and supernatural sometimes seems contrived, while the separation between extraordinary and supernatural sometimes feels arbitrary. But from the concept of antimagic in general, plus the slightly different but related ability to dispel spells, this division in special abilities evolved.

In an *antimagic field,* only extraordinary abilities function. So if you're a monster lucky enough to have a key ability deemed extraordinary, you might actually want to seek out areas of antimagic and lurk there, waiting for hapless creatures that use spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities to stumble upon you. Then you can show them up with your extraordinary ability to howl, throw quills, fast heal, or what have you.

—Bruce R. Cordell, designer

Appraise

Use this skill to tell a fancy show sword from an elf heirloom, high-quality jewelry from costume junk, and a fine work of art from a common one.

APPRAISE (INT)

By taking 1 minute you can appraise the value of an object, predict what a performer might expect to receive as compensation, and even estimate the quality of craftsmanship before work is complete. You can try to appraise quickly in just 1 round, increasing the DC by 5. To evaluate a work, such as an entire poem, you must take whatever time is required to read or otherwise observe that work—this can't be done quickly.

Failure on a normal Appraise check for common items or works means a misjudgment of 2d6+3 × 10% of actual value. Failure for more valuable items or when using Appraise quickly means you can't estimate the item's value.

You can't try a normal Appraise check again on the same object, regardless of success. If you tried to appraise an item quickly and failed, you can then try to appraise that item normally, but you can't try to appraise the item quickly again. You can try to appraise an item normally whether or not you successfully appraise that item quickly.

Illus. by D. Riche

The skill modifiers mentioned in the text following the table assume the skill's user was taking 10 on the relevant skill check.

Appraise

Task	DC
Tell which race made an item	10
Appraise common item or work	12
Appraise good item or work	15
Appraise rare item or work	20
Appraise exotic item or work	25
Appraise unique item or work	30

Conditions	DC Modifier
Appraise in 1 round	+5

Common Items and Works

Items in this category include trade goods, spices, foodstuffs, raw materials, mundane items, livestock, and so on. Items and works of this sort are usually made or performed by those who have a relevant skill modifier lower than +5.

Good Items and Works

Items in this category include good cloth, rare spices, folk art, and valuable materials such as pure gold bars. Items and works of this sort are usually made or performed by those who have a relevant skill modifier of +5 to +9.

Rare Items and Works

Items in this category include fine clothing, raw ore of precious metals, gems, and fine artwork. Items and works of this sort are usually made or performed by those who have a relevant skill modifier of +10 to +14.

Exotic Items and Works

Items in this category include unusual gems (strange colorings, unusual to the region, unusually large or pure), spell components, jewelry, jewels, exotic fine art, and obscure religious items. Items and works of this sort are usually made or performed by those who have a relevant skill modifier of +15 to +19.

Unique Items and Works

Items in this category include masterpiece artwork, extremely rare jewels, and lavish and complex religious items or jewelry. Items and works of this sort are usually made or performed by those who have a relevant skill modifier of +20 or higher.

PRECISION APPRAISING

Estimating the value of loot is a nice idea. But the basic concept, that Jill or Joe Adventurer can make a reasonable estimate of the value of anything from horseflesh to fine fabrics, is still difficult to rationalize.

My husband, Chris, revised rules in his home campaign for appraising items based on their general classification. Characters can purchase ranks in any or all of six different categories: precious metals and gems, objets d'art, arms and armor, food and wine, magical beasts, and domestic/common beasts and products. These categories are arranged in a circular pattern, so that some are linked more closely than others; for example, precious metals and gems is close to objets d'art but very far from domestic beasts. Different character classes and races have starting bonuses in certain categories, and social rank can have an effect as well. A character can attempt to appraise items in any category, but a cumulative modifier of –2 per category distant from a category in which he has ranks is applied to the skill check.

—Jennifer Clarke Wilkes, editor

Birth of a Rule

by David Noonan, designer

Take a look at the three core rulebooks. That's almost a thousand pages of rules. So where do they all come from?

We can trace a lot of our rules back to the dim mists of history—the 1970s, specifically. The most fundamental rules of D&D, such as hit points, AC, and what we used to call the "to hit" rule, all came from those little booklets with storied names: *Chainmail; Greyhawk; Blackmoor; Eldritch Wizardry; Gods, Demi-Gods, & Heroes.* A lot of D&D's smaller rules come from those first books too.

Ever wonder why elves are immune to paralysis? As far as we can figure out, that immunity came from a game-balance issue in the original *Chainmail* rules, which mostly covered medieval warfare (with a fantasy supplement that spawned the game we all play today). Masses of low-cost undead troops were beating up high-cost elf troops, so the "elves are immune to paralysis" emerged as a balancing factor. More than thirty years later, we're still using that rule.

The wellspring of fantasy literature inspired a lot of our rules, too. The *Dying Earth* books from Jack Vance had some influence on how D&D spellcasting works, although it's not so easy to see the connection today. The salient feature of D&D's cursed weapons, that you don't want to get rid of them even after you know about the curse, comes straight from Tolkien's One Ring and Moorcock's Stormbringer.

WHAT GIVES BIRTH TO RULES TODAY?

Essentially, my job is to sit at this desk and crank out new rules for you. So where do I come up with new rules?

Trouble at the Table: If I see something that isn't working at my D&D table, a new rule is often the solution. Most of our rules for *polymorph* and similar effects fall into that category. We created the stacking rules for D&D bonuses to help solve the confusion at the table when nobody knew which bonuses combined well with which other bonuses. It helped us with some game balance issues too, because unlimited stacking is a key ingredient in some way-too-good character builds.

Extension of Another Rule: New rules tend to percolate through the system naturally. Once you've got a rule that lets a sorcerer change his "spells known" list, it makes a certain amount of sense to come up with a parallel rule for a warlock changing his "invocations known" list.

New Blood: When you're seizing new territory for the game, of course it's going to give birth to a lot of new rules. The psionics rules are a good example of new territory for D&D—although it's territory that we reclaim with each new edition of the game. And the rules we create for psionics sometimes lead us to extend other rules. Once we used swift actions and immediate actions in *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, we started extending them all over the place.

Thin Air: Sometimes new rules just come to a game designer unbidden. Game design is like any other creative endeavor in that respect.

IT'S REALLY AN EXCEPTION

One of the bits of game designer jargon that we're fond of is the notion of "exception-based rule sets." Here's a basic definition: An exception-based rule set has simple, straightforward rules, but a whole bunch of cool exceptions that are under at least a degree of player control. In other words, the rules of the game change depending on who's sitting at the table and what they've done so far in the game.

Many of us in the hobby games industry trace exception-based rules back to the 1977 board game *Cosmic Encounter*, which was a straightforward conquer-the-galaxy game—until you handed each player a card that "broke" one specific rule for him and him alone. The player with the Zombie card, for example, never truly takes casualties, and the player with the Mind card gets to see the opponent's cards before playing his own.

Once you know what you're looking for, you see exceptions-based rule sets throughout hobby games. The *Magic: The Gathering* game and other trading card games are prime examples of exception-based rules. Heck, you could make the case that the *Magic* rules mostly adjudicate how you bring your exceptions into play. D&D has been rife with exceptions from its inception too. They're embedded throughout the game. Try some stuff without an exception in your pocket, and your DM will land on you like a ton of bricks. For example:

Class Features: The evasion ability is an exception to the "area spells deal half damage on a successful save" rule.

Feats: Combat Reflexes lets you break the "you can make only one attack of opportunity per round" rule. Spring Attack provides an exception to a more fundamental rule, letting you interrupt your own move action to make an attack, then resume the move.

Magic Items: The back end of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* is a rich vein of exceptions—everything from *Boccob's blessed book*'s exception to the usual economics of wizard spell acquisition to *Heward's handy haversack*'s exception to the "retrieve a stored item" rules to *hand of glory*'s exception to the "two rings per PC" rule.

Monsters: I'd contend that the *Monster Manual* creature with the most exceptions is the hydra. It can make multiple attacks after moving. It tracks hit points separately for different body parts. PCs can use Sunder against the monster's living heads. And there's even an exception to an exception: Not only does the hydra have the Combat Reflexes feat (an exception), but it can use all its heads for attacks of opportunity (the exception's exception).

Races: Elves and dwarves both have built-in exceptions to the Search rules (for secret doors and stonework traps, respectively). For that matter, humans are an exception to the "one feat at 1st level" rule.

Skills: Want an exception to the "take 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet fallen" rule? Try Tumble or Jump—or both, if you've got 'em. Need an exception to the "casting a spell provokes attacks of opportunity" rule? Check out Concentration.

Spells: *Dispel magic* is an exception to the rule that says you must cast the same spell when you're counterspelling. *Find traps* lets a cleric discover magic traps, which ordinarily is a job only for those that have trapfinding.

Armor

Armor is protective, but it can also hinder. Here are commonly used rules for armor.

ARMOR CHECK PENALTY

Any armor heavier than leather hurts your ability to use some skills. An armor check penalty is the modifier that applies to Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble checks made by someone wearing a certain kind of armor. Double the normal armor check penalty is applied to Swim checks. A creature's encumbrance might apply a similar check penalty.

SHIELDS

If you wear armor and use a shield, both armor check penalties apply. They stack.

NONPROFICIENCY

If you wear armor or use a shield you aren't proficient with, you take the armor check penalty on attack rolls, as well as on all Strength-based and Dexterity-based ability and skill checks. This effectively adds Open Lock, Ride, and Use Rope to the list of penalized skills. The penalty for nonproficiency with armor stacks with the penalty for nonproficiency with shields.

If you have a check penalty from encumbrance that is higher than your armor check penalty, use the encumbrance's check penalty on skills normally affected by the armor check penalty. Use the armor check penalty on checks and rolls normally penalized for nonproficiency.

Illus. by S. Belledin

ARCANE SPELL FAILURE

Armor interferes with the gestures an arcane spellcaster must make to cast an arcane spell that has a somatic component. Unless they have a class feature that says otherwise, arcane spellcasters face the possibility of arcane spell failure if they're wearing armor and/or using a shield. A spell without a somatic component, however, can be cast with no chance of arcane spell failure. If a creature is wearing armor and using a shield, the arcane spell failure chances for the two pieces of equipment stack.

When casting an arcane spell that has a somatic component, arcane spellcasters subject to arcane spell failure for the armor they're wearing must roll d%. If the result is equal to or lower than the chance for arcane spell failure, the spell is ruined. The caster still expends the prepared spell or the slot required to cast the spell.

SPELL COMPLETION ITEMS

Activating a scroll or any other spell completion item is like casting a spell for the purpose of arcane spell failure. An armored creature that activates a scroll by using Use Magic Device has the normal arcane spell failure chance.

SLEEPING IN ARMOR

When you sleep in medium or heavy armor, you're fatigued the next day. Sleeping in light armor doesn't cause fatigue.

DONNING AND REMOVING

The time required to don armor depends on its type. See the following table.

Donning Armor

Armor Type	Don	Don Hastily	Remove
Shield (any)	1 move action	n/a	1 move action
Padded, leather, hide, studded leather, or chain shirt	1 minute	5 rounds	1 minute[1]
Breastplate, scale mail, chainmail, banded mail, or splint mail	4 minutes[1]	1 minute	1 minute[1]
Half-plate or full plate	4 minutes[2]	4 minutes[1]	1d4+1 minutes[1]

[1] If the wearer has some help, cut this time in half. A creature doing nothing else can help up to two adjacent wearers. Two wearers can't help each other don armor at the same time.

[2] The wearer must have help to don this armor. Without help, it can be donned only hastily.

Don

This column tells how long it takes to put the armor on. (One minute is 10 rounds.) Readying (strapping on) a shield is only a move action.

Don Hastily

This column tells how long it takes to put the armor on in a hurry. The armor check penalty and armor bonus for hastily donned armor are each 1 point worse than normal.

Remove

This column tells how long it takes to take the armor off. Loosing a shield (removing it from the arm and dropping it) is only a move action.

Armor Class

Your Armor Class (AC) represents how hard it is for opponents to land a damaging blow on you. It's the attack roll result that an opponent needs to achieve to hit you.

AC = 10 + size modifier + Dex modifier + armor bonus + shield bonus + deflection bonus + insight bonus + natural armor bonus + dodge bonuses + other modifiers

Size Modifier

The bigger a creature is, the easier it is to hit. The smaller it is, the harder it is to hit. Since this same modifier applies on attack rolls, a Small creature doesn't have a hard time hitting another Small creature. See Size, page 116.

Dexterity Modifier

If your Dexterity is high, you're adept at dodging blows. If your Dexterity is low, you're inept at this task. That's why you apply your Dexterity modifier to your AC. Armor limits your Dexterity bonus, so if you're wearing armor, you might not be able to apply your whole Dexterity bonus to your AC.

Sometimes you can't react to a blow, so you're denied your Dexterity bonus to AC, but any Dexterity penalty still applies. You lose your Dexterity bonus when, for example, an invisible opponent attacks you, you're climbing, or you're stunned. Being caught flat-footed at the beginning of combat is also this sort of situation—see Flat-Footed, below.

Armor and Shield Bonuses

Your armor and shield each provide a bonus to AC. This bonus represents their ability to protect you from blows.

Enhancement Bonuses

An enhancement bonus makes an armor bonus, natural armor bonus, or a shield bonus better. The enhancement bonus stacks as if it were part of the bonus to which it applies—armor, natural armor, or shield—so it's not included in the AC formula above.

Deflection Bonus

Magical deflection effects ward off attacks, improving AC.

Insight Bonus

An uncanny knack to sense danger and react to it improves AC. Some creatures have insight bonuses to AC, and a number of magical effects provides such bonuses.

Natural Armor Bonus

Natural armor represents an inborn or magical resistance to attacks that improves AC.

Dodge Bonuses

Dodge bonuses represent actively avoiding blows. Any situation that denies you your Dexterity bonus to AC also denies you dodge bonuses. Wearing armor doesn't limit these bonuses the way it limits a Dexterity bonus to AC. Unlike most other bonuses, dodge bonuses stack with each other.

Other Modifiers

Circumstances can modify your Armor Class.

ARMOR CLASS MODIFIERS

Defender is . . .	Melee	Ranged
Balancing (4 or fewer ranks in Balance)[1, 2]	+0	+0
Behind cover[3]	+4	+4
Behind improved cover[4]	+8	+8
Behind limited cover[5]	+2	+2
Blinded[1]	–2	–2
Climbing (without a climb speed)[1, 6]	+0	+0
Cowering[1]	–2	–2
Entangled[7]	+0	+0
Fighting defensively	+2	+2
Flat-footed[1]	+0	+0
Grappling (but attacker isn't)[1]	+0	+0[8]
Helpless[9]	–4	+0
Kneeling or sitting	–2	+2
Off balance due to failing a Swim check[1]	+0	+0
Pinned[9, 10]	–4	+0
Prone	–4	+4
Running (full-round action)[1]	+0	+0
Squeezing	–4	–4
Squeezing (space less than half normal; DC 30 Escape Artist check)[1]	–4	–4
Stunned[1]	–2	–2
Successfully feinted by a foe[1]	+0	+0
Using total defense	+4	+4

1 Defender is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.
2 If defender takes damage while balancing, it must make another Balance check against the same DC or fall prone.
3 Defender also receives a +2 bonus on Reflex saves.
4 Defender also receives a +4 bonus on Reflex saves and a +10 bonus on Hide checks, and benefits of evasion.
5 Defender also receives a +1 bonus on Reflex saves.
6 If defender succeeded on a Climb check after adding 20 to the Climb DC, it isn't denied its Dexterity bonus to AC. If defender takes damage while climbing, it must make another Climb check against the same DC or fall.
7 Defender takes a –4 penalty to Dexterity, which results in a modifier 2 lower than normal.
8 Roll randomly to see which grappler you strike.
9 Treat defender's Dexterity as 0 (–5 modifier), but only for determining AC. Defender subject to attacks, such as sneak attack, that rely on a target being denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.
10 AC penalty doesn't apply against the pinning creature.

TOUCH

Some attacks disregard your armor, shield, and natural armor. In these cases, the attacker makes a touch attack roll against your touch AC.

Touch AC = AC – armor bonus – shield bonus – natural armor bonus

FLAT-FOOTED

You can't react well to danger at the beginning of combat until you've taken your first turn. In such cases, you use flat-footed AC.

Flat-footed AC = AC – Dex bonus – dodge bonuses

Attacks and Damage

Attacking is a basic part of combat. Doing so takes a standard action or part of a full-round action (see Full Attack, below).

MELEE ATTACKS

With a melee weapon, a natural weapon, or even a bare fist, you can strike any opponent within reach, which is normally 5 feet for Small and Medium creatures. Opponents within 5 feet are considered adjacent to you. Some weapons and creatures have longer reach.

Melee attack bonus = base attack bonus + Str modifier + size modifier + enhancement bonus + other modifiers

Base Attack Bonus

Your class or creature type along with your character level or number of Hit Dice determine your base attack bonus. Sometimes these factors combine, such as when a creature has racial Hit Dice and then takes class levels.

Strength Modifier

If your Strength is high, you can deliver more forceful blows that are capable of cutting through defenses. A creature that has a low Strength is unable to apply enough force. Therefor you apply your Strength modifier on melee attack rolls.

Enhancement Bonus

Enhancement bonuses make your weapon better. Such bonuses come from masterwork or magic weapons.

Other Modifiers

Circumstances can modify your attack roll. See the Attack Roll Modifiers table on the facing page.

UNARMED ATTACKS

Striking with punches and kicks is like attacking with a melee weapon, except that such attacks usually provoke an attack of opportunity from the foe you attack, provided that opponent is armed. The attack of opportunity comes before your attack. An unarmed attack doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity from other foes, nor does it provoke an attack of opportunity from an unarmed foe. An unarmed creature can't make attacks of opportunity.

Natural Weapons

A creature that has a natural weapon, such as a claw or slam, is considered armed. It can make unarmed attacks, but it can't use its natural weapons as if they were unarmed attacks, nor can it apply abilities that affect only unarmed attacks to its natural weapons.

"Armed" Unarmed Attacks

Sometimes a creature's unarmed attack counts as an armed attack. A monk, a character who has the Improved Unarmed Strike feat, and a spellcaster delivering a touch attack spell all count as armed. Being armed in this way counts for both offense and defense. So a creature armed in this way can make attacks of opportunity, and such a creature doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity when attacking. (The act of casting a spell provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.)

RANGED ATTACKS

With a ranged weapon, you can shoot or throw at any target that is within the weapon's maximum range (see Range Penalty). Line of sight isn't required—you can fire at a creature that has concealment, hoping you hit your target. Intervening creatures and obstacles, however, can block your shot or provide cover for the creature you're aiming at. You provoke attacks of opportunity when firing or throwing a ranged weapon.

Ranged attack bonus = base attack bonus + Dex modifier + size modifier + enhancement bonus + range penalty + other modifiers

Dexterity Modifier

If your Dexterity is high, you're naturally accurate with ranged weapons. If your Dexterity is low, you're inaccurate.

Range Penalty

Every ranged weapon has a range increment. Each full range increment the weapon or ammunition must travel before hitting its target imposes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll. A thrown weapon has a maximum range of five range increments. A projectile weapon can shoot up to ten range increments.

Other Modifiers

Many circumstances that modify melee attack rolls also apply to ranged attack rolls, but some, such as the penalty imposed for shooting into a melee, apply only to ranged attack rolls. See the Attack Roll Modifiers table.

RANGED ATTACKS INTO A MELEE

If you shoot or throw a ranged weapon at an opponent engaged in melee with an ally, you take a –4 penalty on your attack roll. Two creatures are engaged in melee if they're opponents of each other and either threatens the other. An unconscious or otherwise immobilized creature isn't considered engaged unless it's actually being attacked.

If your target is at least 2 squares from the nearest ally, you can avoid the –4 penalty. This option applies even if the creature you're attacking is engaged in melee with an ally, provided you can aim at part of the creature that is at least 2 squares from your ally.

TOUCH ATTACKS

Touch attacks come in two types—melee touch attacks and ranged touch attacks. When an attack is a touch attack, your target's AC doesn't include any armor bonus, shield bonus, or natural armor bonus, including enhancement bonuses to these factors. All other modifiers apply normally. To hit your target, you make a touch attack roll—ranged or melee—and all other rules that affect attack rolls still apply.

FULL ATTACK

If you get more than one attack per round because your base attack bonus is high enough, because you fight with two weapons or a double weapon, or for some other reason, you must use a full-round action to be able to make your additional attacks. As you make your attacks, you specify your targets. You can see how the earlier attacks turn out before assigning the later ones.

If you can make multiple attacks because your base attack bonus is high enough, you must make the attacks in order from highest bonus to lowest. You can strike with either weapon first if you're using two weapons or either part of the weapon first if you're using a double weapon.

The only movement you can take during a full attack is a 5-foot step. You can take the step before, after, or between your attacks.

The extra attacks granted by the Cleave feat or the Great Cleave feat can be taken whenever they apply. This is an exception to the normal limit on the number of attacks you can make when not making a full attack.

ATTACK ROLL

An attack roll represents your attempt to strike your opponent. Your attack roll is 1d20 + your attack bonus with the type of attack you're using. If the result equals or exceeds the target's AC, you hit and deal damage.

AUTOMATIC MISSES AND HITS

A natural 1—when the d20 comes up 1—on the attack roll is always a miss. A natural 20—when the d20 comes up 20—is always a hit. A natural 20 is also a threat, which is a possible critical hit (see page 40).

DAMAGE

When an attack succeeds, it deals damage. The weapon used determines the amount of damage dealt. Damage reduces a target's current hit points, unless it's specified as some other sort of damage. Certain attacks, creatures, and magical effects can cause other sorts of damage, such as ability damage, energy drain, or nonlethal damage. When you hit with such an attack, apply the effects of the attack as that attack's description dictates.

DAMAGE MODIFIERS

Other factors in the situation might increase or reduce damage. Commonly, damage is modified by a magical effect. Effects that modify weapon damage apply to unarmed strikes and natural weapons.

MINIMUM DAMAGE

If penalties reduce the damage result to less than 1, a hit still deals 1 point of damage.

MULTIPLYING DAMAGE

Sometimes damage is multiplied, such as on a critical hit. Roll the damage dice and add all modifiers multiple times. Total the results. Extra damage dice over and above a weapon's normal damage, such as those dealt by precision damage abilities (see page 42), are never multiplied.

Specifying Damage Dealt

You can specify that you are dealing lethal damage with a weapon that normally deals nonlethal damage before you make your attack roll, but you take a –4 penalty on that attack roll. You can also specify that you're dealing nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage, but you take a –4 penalty on that attack roll. See Injury, Healing, and Death, page 72.

ATTACK ROLL MODIFIERS

Attacker is . . .	Melee	Ranged
Attacking an off-balance swimmer	+2	+2
Dazzled	–1	–1
Dealing lethal damage with nonlethal weapon	–4	–4
Dealing nonlethal damage with lethal weapon	–4	–4
Energy drained[1]	–1	–1
Entangled[2]	–2	–2
Fighting defensively	–4	–4
Flanking defender	+2	—
Grappling and attacking with an unarmed strike, natural weapon, or light weapon	–4	—
Grappling and attacking with an opponent's weapon after a successful grapple check	–4	—
Invisible[3]	+2	+2
Loser in duel of wills (Intimidate)[4]	–1	–1
Nonproficient with armor worn[5]	—Varies—	
Nonproficient with weapon used	–4	–4
On higher ground than defender	+1	—
Prone[6]	–4	—
Shaken or frightened	–2	–2
Shooting or throwing from range[7]	—	–2
Shooting into melee	—	–4
Squeezing	–4	–4
Subject to rain, severe wind, sleet, or snow	—	–4
Underwater[8]	—Varies—	
Using an improvised weapon	–4	–4
Using an inappropriately sized weapon[9]	–2	–2
Winner in duel of wills (Intimidate)[10]	+1	+1

[1] Cumulative per negative level.

[2] Attacker takes a –4 penalty to Dexterity, which might affect the attack roll.

[3] Bonus doesn't apply if defender is blinded.

[4] Penalty is only on rolls against the winner. If defender submitted, the penalty lasts for 1 round. If defender participated, the penalty also applies on damage rolls and lasts for the entire encounter.

[5] Armor check penalty applies on attack rolls.

[6] Most ranged weapons can't be used while the attacker is prone, but you can use a crossbow or shuriken while prone at no penalty.

[7] Cumulative per range increment from defender.

[8] See Underwater Combat, page 149.

[9] Cumulative per size category of difference.

[10] Bonus is only on rolls against defender that ignored or participated in the duel. If defender ignored you, and you succeeded on a DC 15 Intimidate check, the bonus is a morale bonus that lasts for 1 round. If defender participated and lost, the bonus is untyped and also applies on damage rolls, and it lasts for the encounter.

Attacks of Opportunity

The melee combat rules assume that combatants are actively avoiding attacks. Sometimes combatants in a melee let their guard down. In such cases, other combatants nearby can take advantage of the lapse in defense to attack for free. These free attacks are called attacks of opportunity.

THREATENED SQUARES

If you're considered armed, you threaten all squares into which you can make a melee attack, even when it isn't your turn. That usually means everything in all squares adjacent to your space, including diagonally. An enemy that undertakes certain activities while in a threatened square provokes attacks of opportunity. If you're considered unarmed, you don't normally threaten any squares and thus can't make attacks of opportunity. Certain conditions in combat, such as concealment and cover, also affect your ability to make attacks of opportunity.

Reach

Most creatures of Medium or smaller size have a reach of only 5 feet. This means that they can make melee attacks only against creatures up to 5 feet (1 square) away. However, Small and Medium creatures wielding reach weapons might threaten more squares than a typical creature. Creatures larger than Medium have a natural reach of 10 feet or more, so they threaten all squares within that reach, including diagonal ones. Creatures smaller than Small typically have a natural reach of 0 feet, meaning they can't reach into adjacent squares. Since they have no natural reach, such creatures don't threaten the squares around them at all. See Size, page 116.

PROVOKING ATTACKS OF OPPORTUNITY

Moving out of a threatened square can provoke attacks of opportunity, as can being in a threatened square while performing an act that requires focused attention.

Moving

Moving out of a threatened square usually provokes an attack of opportunity from any opponent who threatens that square. Two methods of movement allow you to avoid such an attack: 5-foot step and withdraw. See Movement, page 90.

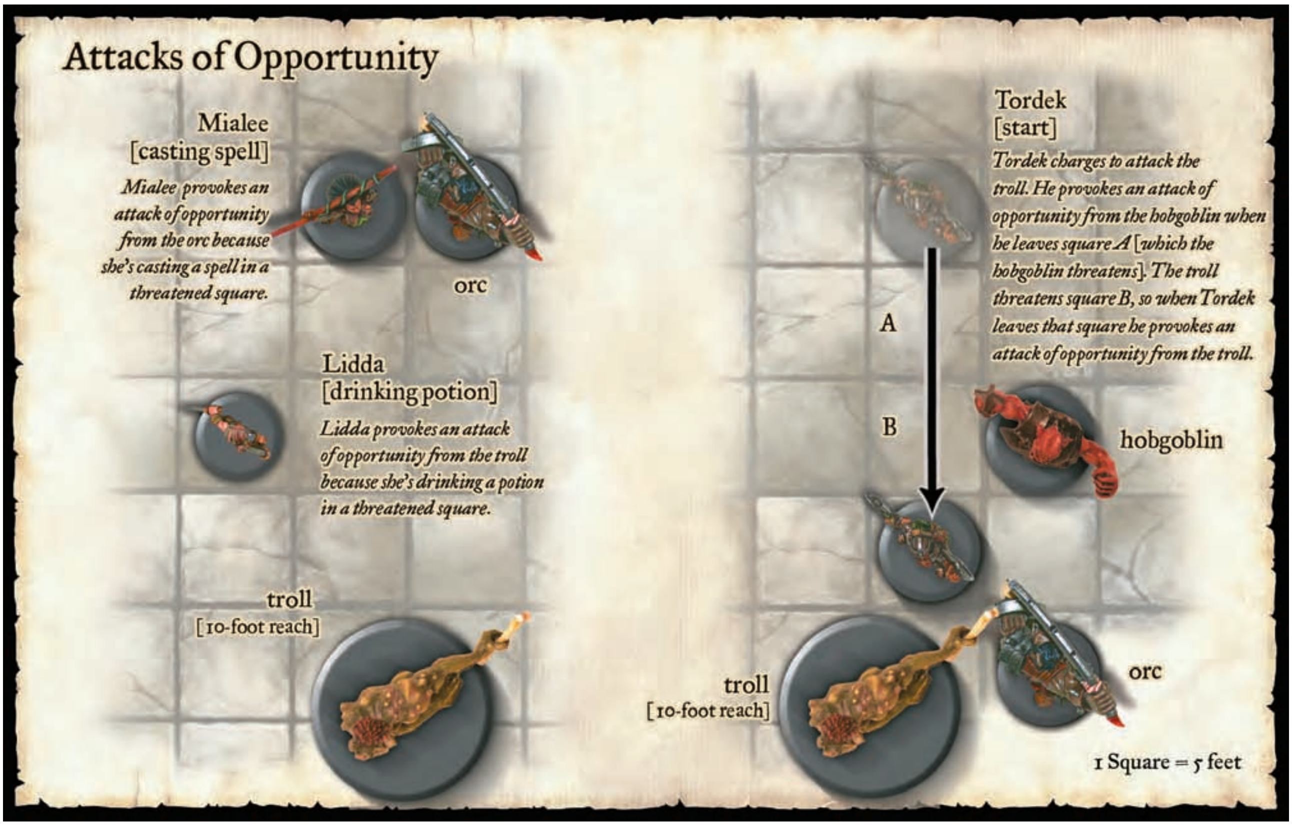
Moving out of more than one square threatened by the same opponent in the same round doesn't count as more than one opportunity for that opponent.

Focused Act

When you focus your attention on what you're doing, you divert your attention from the battle. The Actions in Combat table, page 8, notes many activities that provoke attacks of opportunity for this reason. Some such actions allow you to make a Concentration check to avoid provoking (see Concentration, page 33). Even actions that normally provoke attacks of opportunity can have exceptions.

MAKING ATTACKS OF OPPORTUNITY

An attack of opportunity is a single melee attack you can make when you're active in combat and an opportunity presents itself. If you're flat-footed, you can't make attacks of opportunity, and you don't ever have to make an attack of opportunity if you don't want to. Making an attack of opportunity isn't considered an action, but you can make only one attack of



Mialee provokes an attack of opportunity from the orc because she's casting a spell in a threatened square.

Lidda provokes an attack of opportunity from the troll because she's drinking a potion in a threatened square.

Tordek charges to attack the troll. He provokes an attack of opportunity from the hobgoblin when he leaves square A [which the hobgoblin threatens]. The troll threatens square B, so when Tordek leaves that square he provokes an attack of opportunity from the troll.

Illus. by T. Nordstrand

opportunity per round unless you have an attribute that allows you to make more (see below). If you have multiple attacks for some reason, you use your highest normal attack bonus when you make your attack of opportunity, even if you've already attacked during the round.

An attack of opportunity interrupts the normal flow of actions in the round. If an attack of opportunity is taken, immediately resolve that attack of opportunity, then continue with whatever was happening when the attack of opportunity was provoked.

Multiple Attacks of Opportunity

Some abilities allow you to make more than one attack of opportunity per round. Most such abilities, unless they say otherwise, don't let you make more than one attack for a given opportunity. If the same opponent provokes two attacks of opportunity from you, however, you could make two separate attacks of opportunity. Each provoking act represents a different opportunity. Multiple attacks of opportunity otherwise follow the rules for normal attacks of opportunity.

CLERICAL ERROR

Especially when you've got lots of hit points, it can be tempting to provoke attacks of opportunity willy-nilly, taking a little damage in exchange for unfettered action. That's a valid tactical option, but a nonchalant attitude toward such attacks from powerful opponents can backfire.

In a playtest a few years ago, we were fighting a frost giant jarl (not the CR 17 one in the *Monster Manual*), and we were hard pressed. One of us slipped out of the meeting room and grabbed a phone. Word soon went out over the building's intercom: "Could a 7th-level cleric please report to Focus Group Room 2 immediately?"

Enter Rob Heinsoo and his 7th-level cleric, possessed of both hit points and moxie in abundance. Seeing wounded comrades locked in melee with the frost giant jarl, he moved forward, eager to drop a big *cure* spell on the fighter.

Because the giant had reach and some advantageous terrain, Rob's cleric provoked an attack of opportunity just for moving nearby. It's just an attack of opportunity, right? What's the worst that could happen?

One critical hit from a massive greataxe later, Rob's cleric was dead on the icy floor. But the disaster didn't end there. When Rob's cleric fell, that triggered the jarl's Cleave feat and killed the fighter, too.

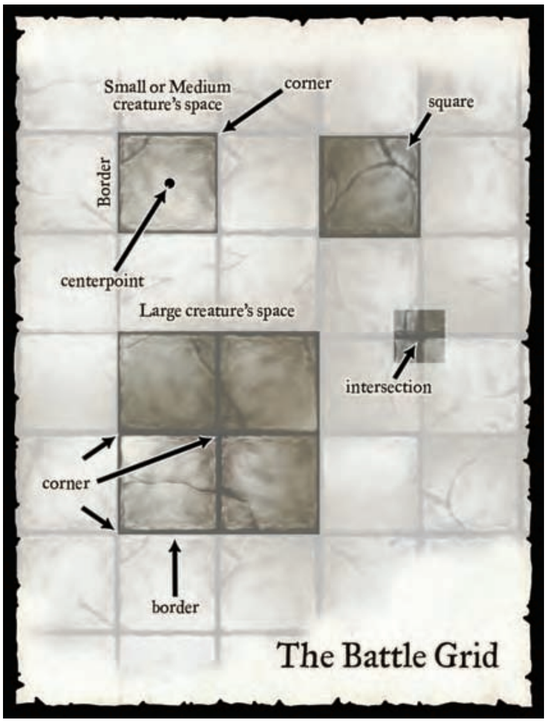
The final tally for Rob's cleric: 15 feet moved, two PCs dead. That might be the shortest PC life span I've ever seen. And it's worth noting that if Rob's cleric hadn't been there, the fighter would have survived until his next turn—and maybe beyond.

—David Noonan, designer

Battle Grid

To help visualize the fictional world of the D&D game, use of a battle grid and miniature figures is recommended. A battle grid consists of a grid of 1-inch squares. Each of these squares represents a 5-foot square in the game world. See the diagram for some specifics about the battle grid. Miniatures are metal or plastic figures used to represent characters, monsters, and scenery in the game. If you don't have miniatures, you can use some other form of markers or tokens, as long as it's clear which token represents which object or creature.

You can use the grid, along with miniatures, to show marching order or the relative location of the characters in any given situation. As its name implies, however, a battle grid is best used in a combat situation. Then the grid helps everyone determine and regulate the distance between individuals, tactical movement, line of sight, areas of spells and effects, and so on. Sometimes position in combat makes the difference between life and death. The battle grid and miniatures help everyone agree on the locations of creatures and significant objects.



Illus. by C. Frank

MEASURING DISTANCE

When measuring distance on the grid, the first diagonal counts as 1 square, the second counts as 2 squares, the third counts as 1, the fourth as 2, and so on.

Closest Creature

When it's important to determine the closest square or creature to a location, if two squares or creatures are equally close, determine the closest randomly.

BRINGING THE GAME TO LIFE

My first experiences with D&D didn't involve miniatures or a battle grid. A typical fight would involve the DM declaring which PCs were being attacked, and dice were rolled. If the thief wanted to backstab, or if the wizard wanted to take cover, only the DM's sometimes capricious whim would allow it.

One day I picked up a few metal minis, and a box of plastic D&D monsters, and quickly realized the advantage of being able to visually represent an encounter. Now the rogue's player could see the path to take to get in a backstab, and the wizard could determine the closest doorway to duck into for cover. Combats became more tactical and efficient. Faster fights meant more encounters per session, and more time to focus on the story.

My game evolved, and each year I adopted a new tool to help illustrate my games. Long before cast 3D dungeon terrain or *D&D Dungeon Tiles,* I cut up an old refrigerator box into cardboard representations of the rooms of Undermountain. I graduated to giant easel pads overlaid with a transparent, dry-erasable surface. Now I use a combination of dry-erase grids, 3D terrain, computer generated or printed battle maps, and D&D Dungeon Tiles, along with a mix of D&D Miniatures and painted metal, to bring my D&D game to life.

The only tradeoff to the precision of a battle grid is the sometimes odd shapes needed to represent areas, due to the nature of diagonal distance. In a simulationist effort, 3rd Edition suggested counting diagonals as 1-1/2 squares instead of 1 square (or every other diagonal counted as 2). As a result, fireballs didn't look perfectly round, and cones worked best only when aligned along the grid or at a 45-degree angle. Templates helped matters, but the players and DM have to buy into the restrictions associated with placing such areas on the battle grid.

— Stephen Schubert, developer

Bonuses

Many racial abilities, class features, spells, and magic items offer bonuses on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, Armor Class, ability scores, or skill checks.

STACKING

Bonuses of different types always stack. Bonuses that have identical types don't stack, except for dodge bonuses and some circumstance bonuses. Untyped bonuses stack unless the bonuses come from the same effect.

Penalties aren't usually typed, but identical types of penalties don't stack. In this latter case, the worst penalty applies.

BONUS TYPES

Bonuses are classified by type, as described here.

Alchemical

An alchemical bonus represents the benefit from a chemical, usually one ingested prior to receiving the bonus.

Armor

This is the bonus that nonmagical armor gives a creature. An effect that gives an armor bonus typically creates an invisible, tangible field of force.

Circumstance

This is a bonus or penalty based on situational factors, which might apply either to a check or the DC for that check. Circumstance modifiers stack with each other, unless they arise from essentially the same circumstance.

Competence

When a creature has a competence bonus, it actually becomes better at what it's doing.

Deflection

A deflection bonus increases a creature's AC by making attacks veer off.

Dodge

A dodge bonus enhances a creature's ability to get out of the way quickly. Dodge bonuses stack with other dodge bonuses, but they don't apply whenever a creature is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.

Enhancement

An enhancement bonus represents an increase in an armor bonus, a natural armor bonus, or a shield bonus. It can also represent an increase in a weapon's effectiveness or a general bonus to an ability score.

Inherent

An inherent bonus is a bonus to an ability score that results from powerful magic. A creature is limited to a total inherent bonus of +5 to any ability score.

Insight

An insight bonus makes a creature better at what it's doing by giving an almost precognitive knowledge of factors pertinent to the activity.

Luck

A luck bonus represents good fortune.

Morale

A morale bonus represents determination. Such bonuses come from mind-affecting effects.

Natural Armor

A natural armor bonus is the type of bonus that many creatures have because of their tough or scaly hides.

Profane

A profane bonus represents the power of evil.

Racial

Creatures gain racial bonuses—usually to skill checks—based on the kind of creature they are.

Resistance

A resistance bonus is a general bonus against magic or harm. Resistance bonuses almost always affect saving throws.

Sacred

A sacred bonus relates to the power of good.

Shield

Much like an armor bonus, a shield bonus to AC represents the protection a nonmagical shield affords. An effect that gives a shield bonus usually represents an invisible, tangible shield of force that moves to protect a creature.

Size

When a creature changes size due to a magical effect, some of the changes can be size bonuses or size penalties. Such modifiers stack with those granted by natural size or changes in natural size, such as when a monster advances.

BONUS BENCHWARMERS

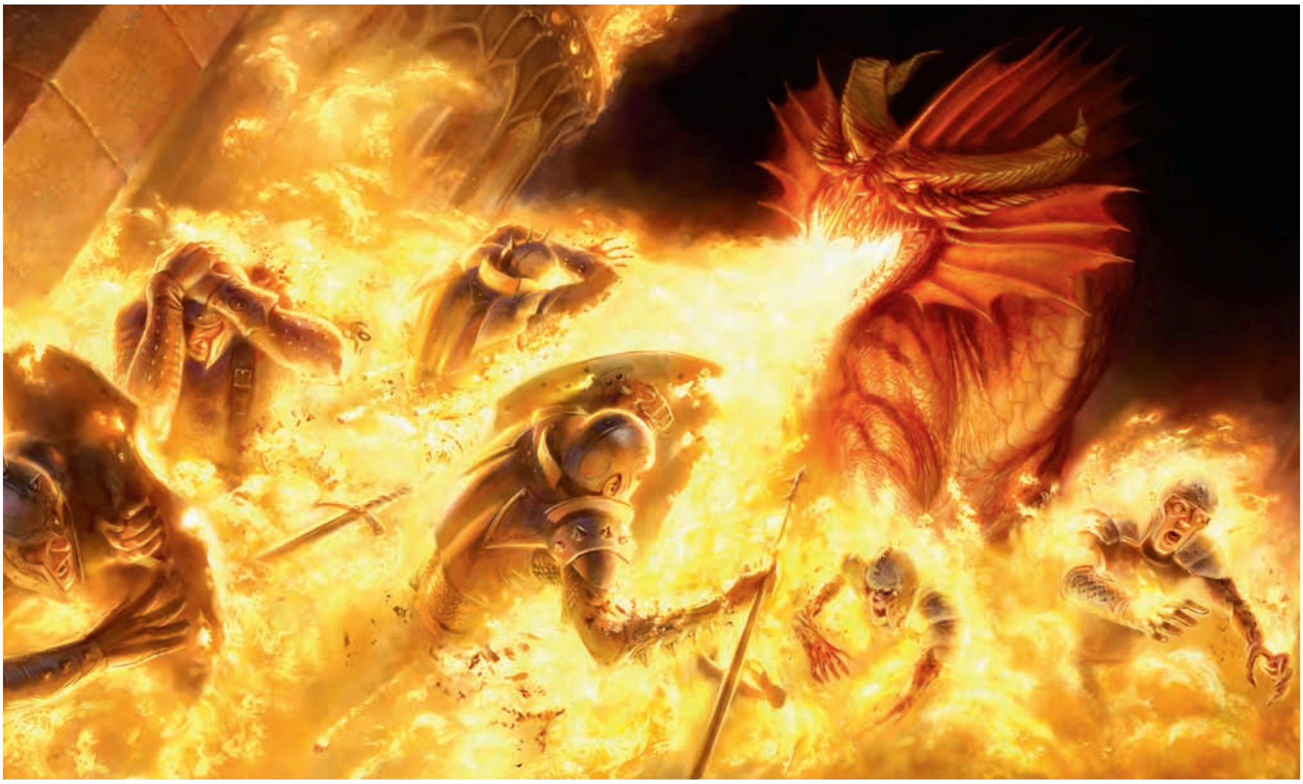
Sadly, not all bonus types are created equal.

Alchemical: How many items from the core books give an alchemical bonus? Well, there's antitoxin. Yep . . . antitoxin.

Morale: This bonus type is doing well for itself, but lack of stacking is strange. "Nah, I don't want *bless*. With the bard's song, honestly, I just can't get more pumped."

Profane and Sacred: Sure they have *consecrate/desecrate* and *hallow/unhallow,* but these types get left out of *bless, prayer,* and the like, even though such spells seem to be a natural fit. To make matters worse, these types don't appear on any items in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*—not even a token bonus from a *book of exalted deeds* or *book of vile darkness*.

—Logan Bonner, editor



Illus. by T. Lockwood

Breath Weapon

Dragon fire is the classic example, but a breath weapon can be a cloud of poisonous gas, a bolt of lightning, or a stream of acid. Breath weapons are usually supernatural abilities, and a creature needn't be able to breathe to use one.

USING A BREATH WEAPON

When using a breath weapon, a creature is actually expelling something from its mouth rather than conjuring it by means of a spell or some other magical effect. Most creatures that have breath weapons are limited to a number of uses per day or by a minimum length of time that must pass between uses. Even if a creature has more than one type of breath weapon, the time between uses is a time during which it can't use any of its breath weapons.

Using a breath weapon is typically a standard action. No attack roll is necessary. The breath simply fills its stated area, which is usually defined like a spell's area—see Targeting, page 134. Any creature caught in the area must succeed on the appropriate saving throw or suffer the breath weapon's full effect.

SAVES AGAINST BREATH WEAPONS

Breath weapons that deal energy damage allow a Reflex save for half damage (DC 10 + 1/2 breathing creature's racial HD + its Con modifier; the exact DC is given in the creature's descriptive text). Some breath weapons allow a Fortitude save or a Will save instead of a Reflex save. In many cases, a creature that succeeds on its saving throw against such a breath weapon suffers a reduced effect.

Creatures are immune to their own breath weapons.

TIMELY BREATH

My favorite character was "War" (Aryte ux Bahamuti tibur Aryte) a dragonborn warforged warblade 1/dragon shaman 1/barbarian 1 who had the "heart" aspect. So he was able to breathe every 1d4 rounds. At 3rd level, I took the Quicken Breath feat at the same time he became a barbarian. Then I had this really potent low-AC, high-hp fighter with great options for dishing out damage. The breath weapon was a good first move or a perfect finisher.

In one memorable fight, Chase's human warblade, "Preacher," charged, and his charging minotaur strike nearly dropped a hobgoblin. Amber's spellscale warmage, "Anarou," cast *hail of stone,* almost taking down three goblins. War moved forward, raging, anticipating that his steel wind attack against two foes would drop at least one. My dice failed me, getting a 1 and a 2 on the attack rolls. Scott, the DM, smiled, knowing that the bad guys were going next. Just as he was moving War's initiative card to the back of the stack . . .

"Wait!" I said. "I quicken my breath weapon. Let's see. It's a line, and I can get these three guys." I was pointing to the tightly grouped, badly wounded hobgoblin and the two goblins.

Two d8s clattered onto the table.

"12 points! DC 18 Reflex save for half. So, 12 or 6."

Scott gave a mock serious frown. "I don't need to bother rolling their saves. They're all dead."

—Gwendolyn F. M. Kestrel, designer

Bull Rush

You can make a bull rush as a standard action or as part of a charge. When you make a bull rush, you attempt to push an opponent straight back instead of damaging that foe. You can bull rush an opponent who is up to one size category larger than you, but not one larger than that.

INITIATING A BULL RUSH

You move into the defender's space, provoking an attack of opportunity from that defender. You also provoke attacks of opportunity as normal for your movement. Attacks of opportunity made by anyone other than the defender against you during a bull rush have a 25% chance of accidentally targeting the defender instead, and attacks of opportunity by anyone other than you against the defender likewise have a 25% chance of accidentally targeting you. When someone makes an attack of opportunity, roll to see whether the attack went astray, then make the attack roll against the appropriate AC.

RESOLVING A BULL RUSH

You and the defender make opposed Strength checks. A combatant receives a +4 bonus per size category it is larger than Medium or a –4 penalty per size category it is smaller than Medium. You get a +2 bonus if you're charging. The defender gets a +4 bonus if it has more than two legs or is otherwise exceptionally stable.

BULL RUSH RESULTS

If you beat the defender's Strength check result, you push the defender back 5 feet. If you wish to move with the defender, you can push it back an additional 5 feet for every 5 points by which your check result exceeds its result. You can't, however, exceed your normal movement limit.

The defender provokes attacks of opportunity if it is moved. So do you if you move with it. The two of you don't provoke attacks of opportunity from each other for this movement.

If you fail to beat the defender's Strength check result, you move 5 feet straight back to where you were before you moved into its space. If that space is occupied, you fall prone in that space.

Illus. by K. Walker

ROAST RAKSHASA

Using terrain to your advantage is an exciting, dynamic part of D&D. It makes for some memorable encounters.

We had fought our way through any number of nasty opponents to get at the rakshasa mastermind. He laired deep underground, where we confronted him and his fiery minions in a large cavern that had pools of lava. Our warforged fighter focused on the rakshasa while the rest of the party dealt with his entourage. At last, the mastermind stood alone, his allies dead. Nevertheless, he was an impressive foe, resistant to most magic and weapon damage. We fought for several rounds, with him getting the better of us.

At last, the player of the warforged looked up, a gleam in his eye. "I bull rush him!"

Not even the rakshasa's fiendish defenses could protect it from immersion in lava.

—Gwendolyn F. M. Kestrel, designer

Changing Forms

Some special abilities allow a creature to change its form or appearance. When a creature is using any ability described in this entry, a *true seeing* spell or ability reveals its natural form (the form it would always be in if it couldn't change forms at all). A creature using one of these abilities reverts to its natural form when killed, but separated body parts retain their shape. A creature can't use one of these abilities to take the form of a creature with a template.

ALTERNATE FORM

A creature that has this special quality has the ability to assume one or more specific alternate forms. Assuming an alternate form results in the following changes to the creature.

- The creature retains the type and subtype of its natural form. It gains the size of its assumed form.
- The creature loses the natural weapons, natural armor, and movement modes of its natural form, as well as any extraordinary special attacks of its natural form not derived from class levels.
- The creature gains the natural weapons, natural armor, movement modes, and extraordinary special attacks of its assumed form.
- The creature retains the special qualities of its natural form. It doesn't gain any special qualities of its assumed form.
- The creature retains the spell-like abilities and supernatural attacks of its old form, except for breath weapons and gaze attacks. It doesn't gain the spell-like abilities or supernatural attacks of its assumed form.
- The creature gains the physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution) of its assumed form. It retains the mental ability scores (Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma) of its natural form.
- The creature retains its Hit Dice, hit points, base attack bonus, and base save bonuses, although some of these numbers might change based on its new ability scores.
- The creature retains any spellcasting ability it had in its natural form, although it must be able to speak intelligibly to cast spells that have verbal components, and it must have humanlike hands to cast spells that have somatic components.
- The creature is effectively camouflaged as a creature of its assumed form, and it gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.
- Any gear worn or carried by the creature that can't be worn or carried in its assumed form instead falls to the ground in its space. If the creature changes size, any gear it wears or carries that can be worn or carried in its assumed form changes size to match the new size. (Nonhumanoid-shaped creatures can't wear armor designed for humanoid-shaped creatures, and vice versa.) Gear returns to normal size if dropped.

Illus. by H. Lyon

CHANGE SHAPE

A creature that has this special quality can assume the appearance of a specific creature or type of creature (usually a humanoid), but retains most of its original physical qualities. Changing shape results in the following changes to the creature.

- The creature retains the type and subtype of its natural form. It gains the size of its assumed form.
- The creature loses the natural weapons and movement modes of its natural form, as well as any extraordinary special attacks of its natural form not derived from class levels.
- The creature gains the natural weapons, movement modes, and extraordinary abilities and attacks of its assumed form.
- The creature retains all other attacks and special qualities of its natural form, except for breath weapons and gaze attacks.
- The creature retains the ability scores of its natural form.
- Except as described elsewhere, the creature retains all other game statistics of its natural form, including but not necessarily limited to Hit Dice, hit points, skill ranks, feats, base attack bonus, and base save bonuses.
- The creature retains any spellcasting ability it had in its natural form, although it must be able to speak intelligibly to cast spells with verbal components, and it must have humanlike hands to cast spells with somatic components.
- The creature is effectively camouflaged as a creature of its assumed form, and it gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.
- Any gear worn or carried by the creature that can't be worn or carried in its assumed form instead falls to the ground in its space. If the creature changes size, any gear it wears or carries that can be worn or carried in its assumed form changes size to match the new size. (Nonhumanoid-shaped creatures can't wear armor designed for humanoid-shaped creatures, and vice versa.) Gear returns to normal size if dropped.

REVISED SPELLS

A number of spells allow or force a creature to change shape, such as *alter self, animal shapes, baleful polymorph, polymorph,* and *shapechange.* Spell-like abilities can resemble these spells as well. The spell descriptions delineate how these spells work, but a few have changed significantly since the publication of the *Player's Handbook* and are presented here. For more information on the polymorph subschool, see page 122.

ANIMAL SHAPES

Transmutation (Polymorph)
Level: Animal 7, druid 8, Moon 8, Scalykind 8
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Targets: Up to one willing creature per level, all within 30 ft. of each other
Duration: 1 hour/level (D)
Saving Throw: None; see text
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You transform up to one willing creature per caster level into an animal of your choice; the spell has no effect on unwilling creatures. Use the alternate form special ability to determine each subject's new abilities, rather than the polymorph subschool. The maximum Hit Dice of an assumed form is equal to the subject's HD or your caster level, whichever is lower, to a maximum of 20 HD at 20th level.

Recipients remain in the assumed form until the spell expires or until you dismiss it for all recipients. An individual subject can choose to resume its natural form as a full-round action. Doing so ends the spell for that subject.

BALEFUL POLYMORPH

Transmutation (Polymorph)
Level: Druid 5, Gluttony 5, hexblade 4, Limbo 5, sorcerer/wizard 5, wu jen 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates, Will partial; see text
Spell Resistance: Yes

You force the subject to assume the form of a Small or smaller animal of no more than 1 HD. The subject takes on all the statistics and special abilities of an average member of the assumed form in place of its own except as follows.

- The target retains its alignment and personality, within the limits of the assumed form's ability scores.
- If the target has the shapechanger subtype, it retains that subtype.
- The target retains its hit points.
- The target is treated as having its normal Hit Dice for purpose of adjudicating effects based on HD, such as the *sleep* spell, though it uses the assumed form's base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and all other statistics derived from Hit Dice.
- The target retains the ability to understand but not to speak the languages it understood in its natural form. It can write in the languages it understands only if the assumed form is capable of writing in some manner, such as drawing in the dirt with a paw.

With those exceptions, the game statistics of the assumed form replace the target's normal ones. The target loses all the special abilities it has in its natural form, including its class features.

All items worn or carried by the subject fall to the ground in the subject's space, even if they could be worn or carried by the assumed form.

If the assumed form would prove fatal to the creature—such as if you polymorphed a landbound target into a fish, or an airborne target into a toad—the subject gets a +4 bonus on the save.

If the subject remains in the assumed form for 24 consecutive hours, it must attempt a Will save. If this save fails, the subject loses its ability to understand language, as well as all other memories of its previous form, and its Hit Dice and hit points change to match an average creature of its assumed form. These abilities and statistics return to normal if the effect is later ended.

Incorporeal or gaseous creatures are immune to *baleful polymorph*. A creature of the shapechanger subtype can revert to its natural form as a standard action, ending the spell's effect.

FOOL ME TWICE, SHAME ON YOU

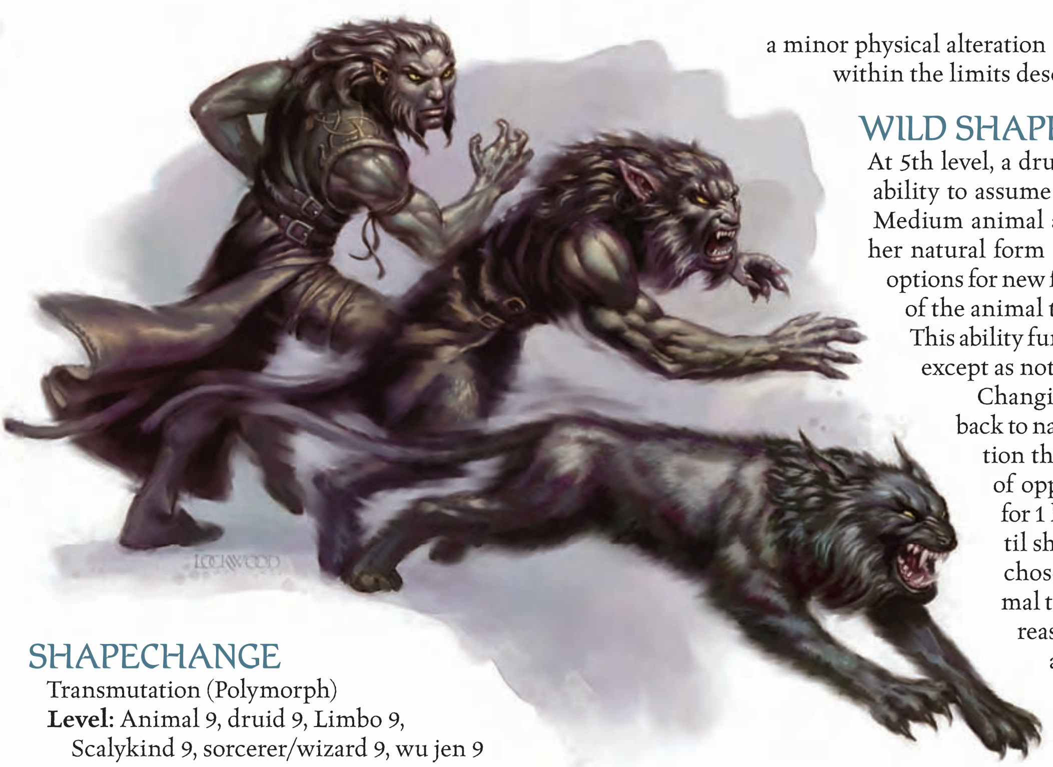
When I first used a doppelganger, the scene played out well. The doppelganger "doubled" a PC. Before any of the players knew what had happened, I took that player aside and gave him a choice between playing his character or playing the doppelganger. Of course, he took the opportunity to mess with his buddies.

When the character and his double showed up simultaneously, the conflict began. Everybody knew one was a fake, but questioning failed to reveal the impostor. Tempers began to flare. Suddenly, one of the players pointed at the character I was controlling (the real one, remember) and said, "I kill that one."

The resulting combat was fatal only for the doppelganger. Hard feelings persisted between the "doubled" character and his would-be killer, but friendship between the players kept it from becoming personal. The players still talk about that encounter.

When I used a doppelganger in this way again, against more experienced players, the encounter lasted 5 minutes. The players' (and characters') reactions to the situation seemed routine. Solving the mystery was about as challenging as kicking an extra point.

—Andy Collins, developer



Illus. by T. Lockwood

SHAPECHANGE

Transmutation (Polymorph)
Level: Animal 9, druid 9, Limbo 9, Scalykind 9, sorcerer/wizard 9, wu jen 9
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 10 min./level (D)

This spell functions like *polymorph*, except that it enables you to assume the form of any single nonunique creature (of any type) from Fine to Colossal size. The assumed form can't have more than your caster level in Hit Dice (to a maximum of 25 HD). Unlike *polymorph*, this spell allows incorporeal or gaseous forms to be assumed.

You gain all extraordinary and supernatural abilities of the assumed form, but you lose your own supernatural abilities. You also gain the type of the assumed form in place of your own. The assumed form doesn't disorient you. Parts of your body or pieces of equipment that are separated from you don't revert to their natural forms.

You can become just about anything you're familiar with, changing form up to once each round as a free action. The change can't take place during another action. If you use this spell to create a disguise, you get a +10 bonus on your Disguise check.

Focus: A jade circlet worth at least 1,500 gp, which you must place on your head when casting the spell. This focus melds into your assumed form.

DRUIDS

Druids have a couple class features that are significantly altered from the *Player's Handbook*.

A THOUSAND FACES

At 13th level, a druid gains the supernatural ability to change her appearance at will, as if using the *disguise self* spell, but only while in her natural form. This change affects the druid's body but not her possessions. It isn't an illusory effect, but a minor physical alteration of the druid's appearance, within the limits described for the spell.

WILD SHAPE

At 5th level, a druid gains the supernatural ability to assume the form of any Small or Medium animal and change back again to her natural form once per day. The druid's options for new forms include all creatures of the animal type (see *Monster Manual*). This ability functions like alternate form, except as noted here.

Changing to an assumed form or back to natural form is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. The effect lasts for 1 hour per druid level, or until she changes back. The form chosen must be that of an animal the druid has seen or could reasonably know about. The assumed form's Hit Dice can't exceed the character's druid level. Each time a druid uses use wild shape, she regains 1 hit point per Hit Die.

A druid loses her ability to speak while in animal form because she is limited to the sounds that a normal, untrained animal can make, but she can communicate normally with other animals of the same general grouping as her assumed form. For instance, the normal sound a wild parrot makes is a squawk, so changing to this form doesn't permit speech.

Any gear worn or carried by the druid melds into the assumed form and becomes nonfunctional. When the druid reverts to her natural form, any objects previously melded into the assumed form reappear in the same location on her body that they previously occupied and are once again functional. Any new items worn in the assumed form fall off and land in the druid's space.

A druid can use this ability more times per day at 6th, 7th, 10th, 14th, and 18th level. In addition, she gains the ability to take the shape of a Large animal at 8th level, a Tiny animal at 11th level, and a Huge animal at 15th level.

At 12th level, a druid becomes able to use wild shape to change into a plant creature, with the same size restrictions as for animal forms. A druid can't use this ability to take the form of a plant that isn't a creature.

At 16th level, a druid becomes able to use wild shape to change into a Small, Medium, or Large elemental (air, earth, fire, or water) once per day. These elemental forms are in addition to her normal wild shape usage.

In addition to the normal effects of wild shape, the druid gains all the elemental's extraordinary, supernatural, and spell-like abilities. She also gains the elemental's feats for as long as she maintains the wild shape, but she retains her own creature type.

At 18th level, a druid becomes able to assume elemental form twice per day, and at 20th level she can do so three times per day. At 20th level, a druid can use this wild shape ability to change into a Huge elemental.

Charge

Charging is a special full-round action that allows you to move up to twice your speed and attack. Charging carries tight restrictions on how you can move.

INITIATING A CHARGE

If you don't have line of sight to the opponent you want to charge at the start of your turn, you can't charge that foe. To charge, you must move at least 10 feet (2 squares) and can move up to double your speed. You must be able to reach the closest space from which you can attack the designated opponent. This movement must occur before your attack. If any line from your starting space to the ending space passes through a square that blocks movement, is difficult terrain, or contains a creature (not a helpless one), you can't charge. You can't charge if the ending space is occupied or blocked. Since you move to charge, you can't take a 5-foot step during the same turn. You provoke attacks of opportunity as normal for your movement.

Restricted Activity

If you're unable to take a full round's worth of actions on your turn, such as during a surprise round, you can charge as a standard action. In this case, you can move up to your speed rather than up to double your speed. All other rules for charging still apply.

Balancing during a Charge

You can make a Balance check to charge across a precarious surface, but you take a –5 penalty on the check for each multiple of your speed (or fraction thereof) that you charge. Charging in this way requires one Balance check for each multiple of your speed (or fraction thereof) that you charge. Any check that fails carries the normal ramifications for failing a Balance check (see page 90), likely ending your movement and preventing your charge.

Flying during a Charge

A creature that flies can make dive attacks. A dive attack works just like a charge, but the diving creature must move a minimum of 30 feet and descend at least 10 feet. It can make only claw or talon attacks, but these deal double damage.

Jumping during a Charge

You can make a long jump to avoid an obstacle as part of a charge, as long as you continue to meet all other criteria for making a charge before, during, and after the jump.

Tumbling during a Charge

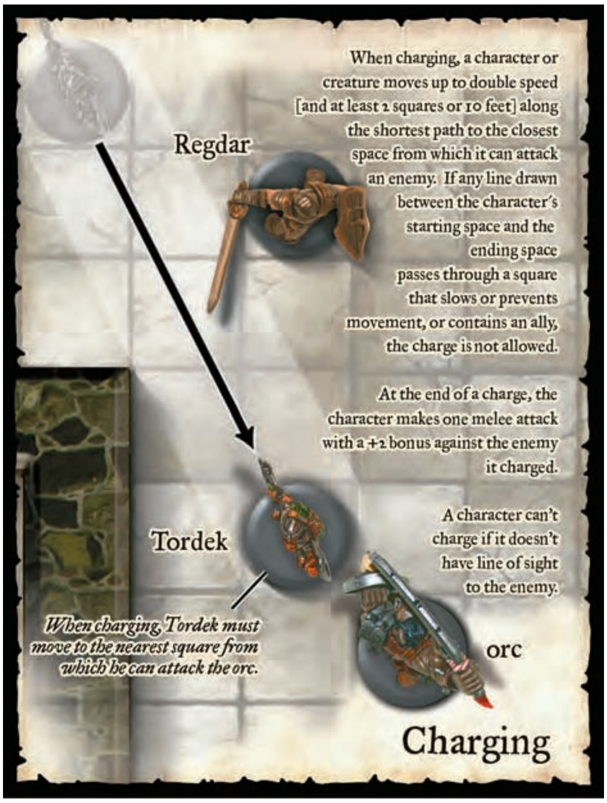
You can tumble during a charge, as long as you continue to meet all other criteria for making a charge before, during, and after tumbling.

RESOLVING A CHARGE

After moving, you can make a single melee attack. Only special abilities that specifically allow multiple attacks as part of a charge can give you more than one attack. Since you use the momentum of the charge in your favor, you receive a +2 bonus on any attack roll made during your turn when you charge. If your attack is a bull rush, you get a +2 bonus on the opposed Strength check. Because a charge is reckless, you take a –2 penalty to your AC until the start of your next turn.

Weapons and Charges

Certain weapons deal double damage when readied (set) and used against a charging creature. Other weapons deal double damage when used during a charge.



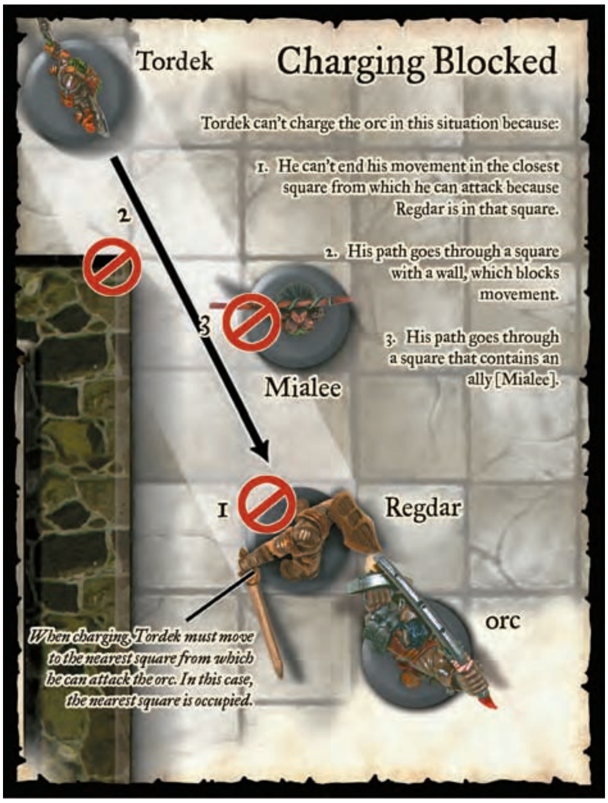
When charging, a character or creature moves up to double speed [and at least 2 squares or 10 feet] along the shortest path to the closest space from which it can attack an enemy. If any line drawn between the character's starting space and the ending space passes through a square that slows or prevents movement, or contains an ally, the charge is not allowed.

At the end of a charge, the character makes one melee attack with a +2 bonus against the enemy it charged.

A character can't charge if it doesn't have line of sight to the enemy.

When charging, Tordek must move to the nearest square from which he can attack the orc.

Charging



Charging Blocked

Tordek can't charge the orc in this situation because:

1. He can't end his movement in the closest square from which he can attack because Regdar is in that square.
2. His path goes through a square with a wall, which blocks movement.
3. His path goes through a square that contains an ally [Mialee].

When charging, Tordek must move to the nearest square from which he can attack the orc. In this case, the nearest square is occupied.

Charm and Compulsion

Many abilities and spells can cloud the mind, leaving creatures unable to tell friend from foe or, worse yet, deceiving them into thinking that their former friends are now their worst enemies. Two kinds of enchantments affect creatures in this way—charms and compulsions. Regardless whether a creature is charmed or compelled, it doesn't volunteer information it isn't asked for. Charms and compulsions are mind-affecting effects.

CHARM

Charming another creature usually makes that creature friendly according to the Influencing NPC Attitudes table (see page 66). Charms of this type include the various *charm* spells. A *charmed* creature retains free will but makes choices according to a skewed view of the charming creature.

- A *charmed* creature doesn't gain any magical ability to understand its new friend's language.
- A *charmed* creature retains its original alignment and allegiances, with the exception that it now regards the *charming* creature as a friend and gives great weight to that creature's suggestions and directions.
- A *charmed* creature fights former allies only if those allies threaten the *charming* creature. Even then, the *charmed* creature uses the least lethal means as long as such tactics show any possibility of success, just as the *charmed* creature would do in a fight between two actual friends.
- A *charmed* creature is entitled to an opposed Charisma check against the *charming* creature to resist requests to do something it wouldn't normally do even for a friend. If successful, the *charmed* creature decides not to go along with that particular request but remains *charmed*.
- A *charmed* creature never submits to a request that is obviously suicidal or grievously harmful.
- If the *charming* creature requests that the *charmed* creature do something that the *charmed* creature is violently opposed to, the *charmed* creature can make a new saving throw to break free of the *charming* effect's influence altogether.
- A *charmed* creature is freed of the *charming* effect if it is openly attacked by the *charming* creature or by that creature's apparent allies.

COMPULSION

Compulsion overrides the subject's free will in some way or simply changes the way the subject's mind works. A compulsion makes the subject obey the effect's parameters or the effect's creator, or both.

Illus. by T. DiTerlizzi

Checks

The whole game can be boiled down to the characters trying to accomplish various tasks, the DM determining how difficult those tasks are to accomplish, and the dice determining success or failure. Combat and spellcasting have their own rules, while checks handle just about everything else.

MAKING CHECKS

To make a check, roll 1d20 and add the appropriate modifiers. The higher the result, the better. Unlike with attack rolls and saving throws, a natural roll of 20 isn't an automatic success, and a natural roll of 1 isn't an automatic failure.

DIFFICULTY CLASS

Some checks are made against a Difficulty Class (DC). The DC is a number that you must score as a result on your check to succeed.

Example Difficulty Classes

Difficulty (DC)	Task (Skill Used)
Very easy (0)	Climb a knotted rope while braced on a wall (Climb)
Easy (5)	Jump 5 feet (Jump)
Average (10)	Hear an approaching guard (Listen)
Tough (15)	Rig a wagon wheel to fall off (Disable Device)
Challenging (20)	Swim in stormy water (Swim)
Formidable (25)	Open an average lock (Open Lock)
Heroic (30)	Tumble through an enemy's space on ice (Tumble)
Nearly impossible (40)	Track a squad of orcs across hard ground after 24 hours of rainfall (Survival)

TIME

Completing a task might take a round, take no time, or take several rounds or even longer. Most skill uses are standard actions, move actions, or full-round actions. Some checks are instant and represent reactions to an event, or they're part of another action.

TRYING AGAIN

In general, you can try a check again if you fail, and you can keep trying indefinitely. Some checks, especially with skills, have consequences for failure that must be taken into account. Trying again can be useless once a check has failed on an attempt to accomplish a particular task. For most checks, success on a given task makes additional successes meaningless.

CONDITIONAL MODIFIERS

Some situations make a check easier or harder, resulting in a bonus or penalty on the check or a change in the DC of the check. The chance of success can be altered in four ways to take into account exceptional circumstances.

- A +2 circumstance bonus represents conditions that improve performance, such as having the perfect tool for the job, getting help from another (see Combining Effort, below), or possessing unusually accurate information.
- A –2 circumstance penalty represents conditions that hamper performance, such as being forced to use improvised tools or having misleading information.
- Reducing the DC by 2 represents circumstances that make the task easier, such as having a friendly audience or doing work that can be flawed.
- Increasing the DC by 2 represents circumstances that make the task harder, such as having an uncooperative audience or doing work that must be flawless.

Conditions that affect your ability to perform the check change the check's modifier. Conditions that modify how well you have to perform the skill to succeed change the DC. A bonus on the skill modifier and a reduction in the check's DC have the same result—they create a better chance of success. But they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

The only numbers that the DM and the player need to remember when calculating all the situational modifiers are +2 and –2. Multiple conditions add up to give the check a total modifier and the DC a final value. Extremely favorable or unfavorable circumstances can cause modifiers greater than +2 and less than –2.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE

Degrees of success usually apply only when the amount of information the DM has to give can be different depending on how well the check succeeds. Beating the DC by more begets more exact or detailed information. Most of the time, it only matters whether the check succeeds or fails.

Failure is usually a sufficient problem. However, failure can sometimes cause additional difficulty. When such consequences exist, a check that fails by 5 or more causes them to occur. Skills that carry an additional risk on a failed check include Balance (fall), Climb (fall), Craft (ruin materials), Disable Device (trigger device), Spot (receive false information from reading lips), Swim (go underwater), and Use Rope (fail to secure grappling hook). Other failure risks might apply, at the DM's discretion.

DICEY NARRATION

In D&D, the system is largely binary—yes or no—so it's usually an all-or-nothing outcome when the d20 rolls. However, the degree of success or failure can always matter in your game. All you have to do, as DM, is use the degree of success or failure to determine how you describe the action. A leaper who fails a Jump check by 1 might have missed the other side, but only by inches. That's different from stretching for the landing when failing by 4, even though a jumper that fails by 4 or less needs to clamber up after just catching the other side. If two enemies are scrambling for the same item, you might use a Dexterity check. If the winner only wins by 1, that's an opportunity for you to make it questionable who grabs the item for an intense second or two. When a climber fails by 6, you can even make the player think everything's fine after a slight slip—right before that second slide turns into a real fall.

This narrative style isn't just for checks. In combat, near misses make the scene more real. They also give your players hints at what they really need to roll to hit the bad guy, a guessing game that can make missing a little less disappointing.

—Chris Sims, editor

SKILL CHECKS

A skill check takes into account training (skill rank), natural talent (ability modifier), and luck (the die roll). It might also take into account a race's knack for doing certain tasks (racial bonus) or what armor you're wearing (armor check penalty), or a certain feat you possess, among other modifiers.

UNTRAINED SKILL CHECKS

If you attempt to use a skill you don't possess, you make a skill check as normal. The skill modifier doesn't have a skill rank added in because you have no ranks in the skill. Any other applicable modifiers, such as the modifier for the skill's key ability, are applied to the check.

Many skills can be used only by someone who is trained in them.

ABILITY CHECKS

Sometimes you try to do something to which no specific skill applies. In these cases, you make an ability check by rolling and adding the appropriate ability modifier. Essentially, you're making an untrained skill check.

In some cases, an act is a straight test of one's ability with no luck involved. Just as you wouldn't make a height check to see who is taller, you don't make a Strength check to see who is stronger.

The game has no rules for trying to stay awake through the night, writing down every word someone says without a mistake, or opening the stuck lid of a container without spilling a single drop of its contents. However, in the course of an adventure, any of these situations could potentially make or break an encounter. The DM has to be ready to make up checks for such nonstandard activities.

The three kinds of ability checks a DM could call for to handle a nonstandard situation include the following.

- A single check using a relevant ability.
- One ability check that, depending on the result, might provide a modifier on another check involving a different ability.
- Two or more separate ability checks, usually involving different abilities, to accomplish a multipart task.

The DM can also use a combination of an ability check and a skill check in an appropriate situation. Decisions on how to handle nonstandard situations are left to the DM's best judgment.

EXAMPLE ABILITY CHECKS

Task	Ability
Breaking open a jammed or locked door	Strength[1]
Threading a needle	Dexterity
Staying awake all night	Constitution
Navigating a maze	Intelligence
Recognizing a stranger you've seen before	Wisdom
Getting oneself singled out in a crowd	Charisma
Writing down every word someone says	Dexterity and Intelligence[2]
Opening a stuck lid without spilling a container's contents	Strength, then Dexterity

[1] See Objects, page 106.

[2] Succeeding on a DC 10 Dexterity check provides favorable conditions (+2) on the Intelligence check.

Illus. by S. Prescott

CASTER LEVEL CHECKS

When you try to accomplish certain tasks using magic, you must make a caster level check. To make such a check, roll a d20 and add your caster level for the spell or effect you're casting or using (usually your level in the appropriate spellcasting class plus applicable modifiers or your Use Magic Device check result –20). Common caster level checks include the one required to overcome spell resistance, the dispel checks required when using *dispel magic*, and the one required to activate a scroll that contains a spell of too high a level for you to cast.

OPPOSED CHECKS

An opposed check is a check whose success or failure is determined by comparing one check result to another check result. In an opposed check, the higher result succeeds, while the lower result fails. In case of a tie, the higher modifier wins. If the modifiers are the same, roll again to break the tie.

CHECKS WITHOUT ROLLS

A check represents an attempt to accomplish some task, usually while under some sort of time pressure or distraction. Sometimes, though, you can use a skill under more favorable conditions and eliminate the luck factor.

TAKING 10

When you aren't being threatened or distracted, you can take 10. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the check, calculate your result as if you had rolled a 10. For many routine tasks, taking 10 makes them automatically successful. Distractions or threats (such as combat) make it impossible for you to take 10. In most cases, taking 10 is purely a safety measure—you expect an average roll to succeed but fear a poor roll might fail, so you elect to settle for the average roll. Taking 10 is especially useful in situations where a high roll doesn't help. It can also speed up play in situations where repeated rolls are necessary. Taking 10 is a good idea whenever you know the result will be a success.

TAKING 20

When you have plenty of time—2 minutes for a skill that can normally be checked in 1 round, one full-round action, or one standard action—you're faced with no threats or distractions, and the skill being attempted carries no penalties for failure, you can take 20. In other words, you should roll a 20 on 1d20 if you roll enough times. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the check, just calculate your result as if you had rolled a 20.

Taking 20 means you're trying until you get it right, and it assumes that you fail many times before succeeding. Taking 20 takes twenty times as long as making a single check would take.

You can't take 20 on any check that has consequences for failure. Since taking 20 assumes that you fail many times before succeeding, you would incur the consequences before completing the task if you did take 20. Common "take 20" skills include Escape Artist, Open Lock, and Search.

CASTER LEVEL CHECKS

The normal take 10 and take 20 rules apply to skill and ability checks. Neither rule applies to caster level checks.

COMBINING EFFORT

When multiple creatures try the same check at the same time for the same purpose, their efforts can overlap.

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Often, several characters attempt some deed, and each succeeds or fails independently. For instance, the result of one character's Climb check doesn't influence the results of other characters' Climb checks.

If you have 5 or more ranks in a skill and are using that skill in a task, you can accept a –4 penalty on your check to grant a +2 circumstance bonus on allies' checks using the same skill to accomplish the same task. If you have 15 or more ranks in the skill, you can accept a –10 penalty on the check to grant a +5 circumstance bonus instead. To benefit, an ally must be within 30 feet of you, and you must be able to see and hear each other.

Balance, Bluff, Climb, Craft, Diplomacy, Escape Artist, Handle Animal, Hide, Move Silently, Ride, Search, Survival, and Swim checks can be assisted in this way. The DM can rule other skills eligible in special circumstances.

AID ANOTHER

You can help another character achieve success on a check by making the same kind of check in a cooperative effort. See Aid Another, page 10.

SKILL SYNERGY

It's possible for you to have two skills that work well together. Having 5 or more ranks in one skill gives you a +2 bonus on skill checks with each of its synergistic skills, as noted in the skill description. In some cases, this bonus applies only to specific uses of the skill in question, not to all checks. Some skills provide benefits on other checks, such as those required to use certain class features.

SCORE!

Getting players to take 10 can be like pulling teeth. John Saxon Wendell, a player in my campaign, wanted his elf cleric to climb down a narrow shaft in *The Forge of Fury*. So, with no prompting, he rolled . . . and failed. He complained that his heroic character shouldn't have failed in that situation. He was right. He should've taken 10. In all fairness, though, he didn't know he could—we were all new to 3rd Edition way back in early 2001.

I've made taking 10 easier in my games. Every player adds 10 to each skill modifier to come up with what I call a "skill score." If the DC for a check in a nonstressful situation (and even some stressful situations) is below a PC's score, that character succeeds without a check. This house rule is also useful for determining what a character knows readily—anything below the score in the relevant Knowledge skill. Information from DCs higher than the score require a normal check. Skill scores are useful for passive Listen and Spot checks too. Using them really speeds up play.

—Chris Sims, editor

Concealment

One way to avoid attacks is to make it hard for opponents to know where you are. Concealment encompasses all circumstances when nothing physically blocks a blow or shot but when something interferes with an attacker's accuracy. Typically, concealment is provided by fog, smoke, shadowy illumination, darkness, tall grass, foliage, or magical effects that make it difficult to pinpoint a target's location.

DETERMINING CONCEALMENT

To determine whether your target has concealment from your ranged attack, choose a corner of your square. If any line from this corner to any corner of the target's square passes through a square or border that provides concealment, the target has concealment.

When you make a melee attack against an adjacent target, your target has concealment if its space is entirely within an effect that grants concealment, such as a cloud of smoke.

Illus. by N. Sackda

When you make a melee attack against a target that isn't adjacent to you, such as with a reach weapon, use the rules for determining concealment from ranged attacks.

In addition, some magical effects provide concealment against all attacks, regardless of whether any intervening concealment exists.

EFFECTS OF CONCEALMENT

Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a 20% chance that the attacker missed because of the concealment. If the attacker hits, the defender must make a miss chance percentile roll to avoid being struck. To expedite play, make both rolls at the same time—and the DM should keep miss chance rolls for monsters and NPCs secret for those times when the players shouldn't know such a roll's result (see Invisibility, page 76).

Multiple concealment conditions don't stack. If a creature receives miss chances from multiple sources, such as from being incorporeal and having concealment, only the highest miss chance applies.

Hide Checks

You can use concealment to make a Hide check. Without concealment, you usually need cover to make a Hide check.

TOTAL CONCEALMENT

If you have line of effect (see page 80) to a target but not line of sight (see page 81), that target is considered to have total concealment from you. You can't attack an opponent that has total concealment, though you can attack into a square that you think that foe occupies. You can't make attacks of opportunity against an opponent that has total concealment, even if you know what square or squares the opponent occupies.

Miss Chance

A successful attack into a square occupied by an enemy that has total concealment has a 50% miss chance.

IGNORING CONCEALMENT

Certain attributes allow a creature to ignore concealment, so concealment isn't always effective. For instance, darkness doesn't provide any concealment against an opponent that has darkvision.

DEGREES OF CONCEALMENT

It usually isn't worth differentiating between more degrees of concealment. However, the DM can rule that certain situations provide more or less than typical concealment, and modify the miss chance accordingly.

ROLL MISS CHANCE FIRST

Although the concealment rules behave as intended—they make you miss and feel very different from the rules for cover—they have a weird effect on play. The miss chance roll turns into a roll to determine if you have fun. If you don't miss due to concealment, you can have the normal fun of hitting. If you fail to hit due to concealment, you get the disappointment of missing and the feeling that you wasted time making the attack roll. The mechanic achieves its goals, but it can make combat tedious and playing less fun.

Many players get around that problem by simply rolling the miss chance before making an attack roll. It saves time and negates some of the sense of disappointment. Feel free to use this variant, but be aware that abilities that require you to declare their use before an attack roll, such as a paladin's smite evil, should be declared before the miss chance roll instead.

—Matthew Sernett, designer

Concentration

Concentration allows you to maintain steely focus even when distracted. It's essential for spellcasting.

CONCENTRATION (CON)

You must make a Concentration check whenever you're distracted while engaged in an activity that requires your full attention. Such acts include casting a spell, concentrating on an active spell, directing a spell, using a spell-like ability, or using a skill that provokes attacks of opportunity.

A distraction strikes during a task you're attempting if it comes between when you start and when you complete that act (for a deed that takes 1 round or more), or if it comes in response to your initiating that activity (such as an attack of opportunity provoked by what you're doing or a contingent attack, such as a readied action). If no distraction occurs during your activity, you usually don't need to make a Concentration check.

The following table summarizes various types of distractions that force you to make a Concentration check, as well as the DCs for those distractions.

CONCENTRATION

Distraction	DC[1]
Injury	10 + damage dealt
Taking continuous damage	10 + 1/2 continuous damage last dealt
Distracted by nondamaging spell	Spell's save DC
Entangled	15
Grappling or pinned	20
Vigorous motion	10
Violent motion	15
Extraordinarily violent motion	20
Bad weather	5
Severe weather	10

Situation	DC[1]
Casting or acting defensively	15

[1] If you're trying to cast, concentrate on, or direct a spell when the distraction occurs, add the level of the spell to the indicated DC.

Injury

Injury is damage from any source.

Continuous Damage

If you're taking continuous damage, such as from a *Melf's acid arrow* spell, half the damage is considered to take place while you're taking your actions. If the last damage dealt was the final damage that the effect could deal, then the damage is over and can't distract you. Repeated damage isn't the same as and doesn't count as continuous damage.

Distracting Spell

Distracting spells might create situations similar to other entries on this table, such as violent motion or weather. If the spell normally allows no save, use the save DC it would have if it did allow a save.

Entangled

You're entangled if you have the entangled condition.

Grappling or Pinned

The only spells you can cast while grappling or pinned are those that have no somatic components and whose material components you have in hand.

Vigorous Motion

This type of motion includes riding on a moving mount, taking a bouncy ride in a wagon, being on a small boat in rough water, being belowdecks on a storm-tossed ship, or being jostled in a similar fashion.

Violent Motion

This type of motion includes riding on a galloping horse, taking a very rough ride in a wagon, riding on a small boat in rapids or in a storm, being on deck on a storm-tossed ship, or being tossed roughly about in a similar fashion.

Extraordinarily Violent Motion

This type of motion includes any extreme situation the DM deems worse than violent motion, such as an earthquake.

Bad Weather

Bad weather includes conditions such as high wind carrying blinding rain or sleet.

Severe Weather

Severe weather includes conditions such as wind-driven hail, dust, or debris.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE

If the Concentration check succeeds, you can continue with what you were doing as normal. If the check fails, you fail at what you were trying to do, wasting your effort. If you were in the process of casting a spell, the spell is lost. If you were concentrating on an active spell, the spell ends as if you had ceased concentrating on it. If you were directing a spell, the direction fails but the spell remains active. If you were using a spell-like ability, that use of the ability is lost. A skill use also fails, and in some cases, a failed skill check might have other ramifications.

CASTING OR ACTING DEFENSIVELY

You can use Concentration to cast a spell, use a spell-like ability, or use a skill while also paying attention to your safety during combat. If the Concentration check succeeds, you can attempt one of the acts mentioned above without provoking attacks of opportunity for doing so. If the Concentration check fails, the related act also fails, with any appropriate consequences. Your effort is wasted, just as if your concentration had been disrupted by a distraction.

A successful Concentration check doesn't allow you to make another check without rolling if you're in a stressful situation—you must make that check normally. Acting defensively can't be applied to other acts that might provoke attacks of opportunity unless the description of that activity says otherwise.

Conditions

This section lists adverse conditions a creature might be subjected to. Each condition is described either here or elsewhere in this book (as indicated by a page reference). If more than one condition affects a creature, apply them all. If certain effects can't combine, apply the most severe one.

Ability Damaged: See page 6.

Ability Drained: See page 6.

Blinded: A blinded creature can't see. It takes a –2 penalty to Armor Class, is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC, moves at half speed, and takes a –4 penalty on Search checks and on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks. All checks and activities that rely on vision (such as reading and Spot checks) fail. All opponents are considered to have total concealment against the blinded creature. A blinded creature pinpoints targets and deals damage to them as if those targets were invisible. Blinded creatures are immune to gaze attacks and other attacks that require the target to be able to see in order to be affected.

Blown Away: Depending on its size, a creature can be blown away by winds of high velocity. Each round a creature on the ground is blown away, it is knocked down and rolls 1d4×10 feet, taking 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per 10 feet. In each round when a flying creature is blown away, it is blown back 2d6×10 feet and takes 2d6 points of nonlethal damage due to battering and buffeting.

Checked: A checked creature is prevented from achieving forward motion by an applied force, such as wind. Checked creatures that are on the ground merely stop. Checked creatures that are flying move back a distance specified in the description of the effect.

Confused: A *confused* creature's activities are determined by rolling d% at the beginning of its turn: 01–10, attack caster with melee or ranged weapons (or close with caster if attacking isn't possible); 11–20, act normally; 21–50, do nothing but babble incoherently; 51–70, flee away from caster at top possible speed; 71–100, attack nearest creature (for this purpose, a familiar counts as part of the subject's self). A *confused* creature that can't carry out the indicated activity does nothing but babble incoherently. Attackers gain no special advantage when attacking a *confused* creature. Any *confused* creature that is attacked always retaliates against its attackers on its next turn, as long as it's still *confused* when its turn comes. A *confused* creature doesn't make attacks of opportunity against any creature that it isn't already devoted to attacking either because of its most recent attack or because it has just been attacked.

Cowering: A cowering creature is frozen in fear or awe, unable to take actions. It takes a –2 penalty to AC and loses its Dexterity bonus (in all applications).

Dazed: A dazed creature is unable to act normally. It can take no actions but has no penalty to AC. A dazed condition typically lasts for 1 round.

Dazzled: A dazzled creature is unable to see well because of overstimulation of the eyes. It takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls, Search checks, and Spot checks.

Dead: See page 73.

Deafened: A deafened creature can't hear. It takes a –4 penalty on initiative checks, automatically fails Listen checks, and has a 20% chance of spell failure when casting spells that have verbal components.

Dehydrated: Creatures that have taken nonlethal damage from lack of water are considered dehydrated and become fatigued. In addition, if a dehydrated creature would take nonlethal damage from hot conditions (see page 155), that damage instead becomes lethal damage.

Disabled: See page 72.

Dying: See page 73.

Energy Drained: See page 49.

Illus. by R. Horsley

Entangled: An entangled creature is ensnared. Being entangled impedes movement, but doesn't entirely prevent it unless the bonds are anchored to an immobile object or tethered by an opposing force. An entangled creature moves at half speed, can't run or charge, and takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity. Casting a spell while entangled requires a Concentration check (DC 15 + the spell's level).

Exhausted: An exhausted creature can neither run nor charge, and it takes a –6 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. It can move at only half speed. After 1 hour of complete rest, an exhausted creature becomes fatigued.

Fascinated: A *fascinated* creature is entranced by a magical effect. The creature stands or sits quietly, taking no actions other than to pay attention to the fascinating effect, for as long as that effect lasts. A *fascinated* creature takes a –4 penalty on skill checks made as reactions, such as Listen and Spot checks. Any potential threat, such as a hostile creature approaching, allows the *fascinated* creature a new saving throw against the fascinating effect. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, casting a spell, or aiming a ranged weapon at a *fascinated* creature, automatically breaks the effect. Another creature that uses a standard action to do so can free a *fascinated* creature from this condition.

Fatigued: A fatigued creature can neither run nor charge and takes a –2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. Doing anything that would normally cause fatigue causes a fatigued creature to become exhausted. After 8 hours of complete rest, a fatigued creature is no longer fatigued.

Flat-Footed: A creature that hasn't yet taken an action during combat is flat-footed, not yet able to react normally to the situation. A flat-footed creature is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC and can't make attacks of opportunity.

Frightened: See page 53.

Grappling: A grappling creature is engaged in some form of hand-to-hand struggle with one or more attackers. Its actions are limited—see page 60. It doesn't threaten any squares, and it's denied its Dexterity bonus to AC against opponents it isn't grappling.

Helpless: A helpless creature is paralyzed, *held*, bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise completely at an opponent's mercy. It is treated as having a Dexterity of 0 (–5 modifier) and takes a –4 penalty to AC against melee attacks. A helpless creature is subject to attacks that rely on a target's being denied its Dexterity bonus to AC. As a full-round action, an enemy can use a melee weapon to deliver a coup de grace to a helpless target.

Immobilized: An immobilized creature can't move out of the space it was in when it became immobilized. It otherwise functions normally unless it's flying. Immobilized flying creatures that have the ability to hover can maintain their initial altitude. All other flying creatures subjected to this condition descend at a rate of 20 feet per round until they reach the ground, taking no falling damage.

Incorporeal: See page 64.

Invisible: See page 76.

Knocked Down: Depending on their size, creatures can be knocked down by winds of high velocity. Creatures on the ground are knocked prone by the force of the wind. Flying creatures are instead blown back 1d6×10 feet.

Nauseated: A nauseated creature is experiencing overwhelming physical discomfort. Nauseated creatures are unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring attention. The only action such a creature can take on its turn is a single move action. This condition affects only living creatures (any not of the construct, deathless, or undead types).

Panicked: See page 53.

Paralyzed: A paralyzed creature is frozen in place and helpless. Such a creature has effective Dexterity and Strength scores of 0, but it can still undertake purely mental activities. A winged creature flying in the air at the time that it becomes paralyzed can't flap its wings and falls. A paralyzed swimmer can't swim and might drown.

Petrified: A petrified creature has been turned to stone and is considered unconscious. If a petrified creature cracks or breaks, but the broken pieces are joined with the body as it returns to flesh, the creature is unharmed. If the creature's petrified body is incomplete when it returns to flesh, the body is likewise incomplete. The DM must then decide whether the creature is subject to permanent hit point loss and/or some form of debilitation.

Pinned: A pinned creature is held stationary (but not helpless) for 1 round. It can't take any actions the pinning creature doesn't allow, even speaking. A pinned creature takes a –4 penalty to AC against opponents other than the pinning creature. It can't move, so its Dexterity is considered to be 0 for the purpose of determining AC (–5 modifier). It is also subject to attacks, such as sneak attacks, that rely on a defender's being denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.

Prone: A prone creature is lying flat on the ground. Any creature, even a limbless one such as a snake, that can flatten itself on the ground can choose to be prone, even if it can't reasonably be tripped or knocked down. An attacker that is prone takes a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls and can't use ranged weapons aside from crossbows and shuriken. A defender that is prone gains a +4 bonus to Armor Class against ranged attacks, but takes a –4 penalty to AC against melee attacks.

Standing up is a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Rebuked: A rebuked creature has been affected by a turning attempt to rebuke. Rebuked creatures cower in awe for 10 rounds.

Shaken: See page 53.

Sickened: A sickened creature is experiencing physical discomfort. The creature takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks. This condition affects only living creatures (any not of the construct, deathless, or undead types).

Stable: See page 73.

Staggered: A staggered creature is one whose nonlethal damage exactly equals its current hit points. A staggered creature can take a single move action or standard action each round (but not both, nor can it take full-round actions). A creature whose nonlethal damage exceeds its current hit points becomes unconscious.

Stunned: A stunned creature drops everything it was holding, can't take actions, takes a –2 penalty to AC, and is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.

Turned: A turned creature has been affected by a turning attempt. A turned creature flees for 10 rounds (1 minute) by the best and fastest means available to it. If it can't flee, it cowers.

Unconscious: An unconscious creature is knocked out and helpless.

Counterspelling

Counterspelling is the active process of using one spell to negate the effect of another, usually during combat. It's possible to cast any spell as a counterspell. By doing so, you're using the spell's energy to disrupt the casting of the same spell by another spellcaster. Counterspelling works even if one spell is divine and the other arcane.

USING COUNTERSPELLING

To use a counterspell, you must select an opponent as the target of the counterspell. You do this by choosing ready as your standard action. In doing so, you elect to wait to complete your action until your opponent tries to cast a spell. You can still take a move action of some sort, since ready is a standard action.

If the target of your counterspell tries to cast a spell, make a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + the spell's level). This check doesn't require using an action. If the check succeeds, you correctly identify the spell and can attempt to counter it. If the check fails, you can't do either of these tasks.

To complete the process, you must then cast the correct spell. A spell can counter only another spell of the same name. If you're able to cast such a spell and you have it prepared (if you prepare spells), you cast it, altering it slightly to create a counterspell effect. If the target is within range, both spells negate each other with no other results.

Counterspelling Metamagic Spells

Metamagic feats aren't taken into account when determining whether a spell can be countered.

Specific Exceptions

Some spells counter each other, especially when they have diametrically opposed effects. A spell's description tells whether that spell can be used to counter another spell.

Dispel Magic as a Counterspell

You can use *dispel magic* to counterspell, and you don't need to identify the spell the other spellcaster is casting. However, *dispel magic* doesn't always work as a counterspell—see the spell description (*PH* 223).

Illus. by C. Frank

SPELL DUELS

Complete Arcane introduced a spell dueling system that takes advantage of counterspelling. Here's how it works.

Arcane spellcasters frequently come up against each other in the course of adventuring, but the chaos of the battlefield makes an accurate measure of skill impossible. For a true test of arcane ability, a single mage meets another mage in a ritual spell duel that observes ancient and honorable formalities. At its basic level, a spell duel is an agreement between two spellcasters to follow the format of the duel. No magic enforces compliance, and dishonorable spellcasters can and do break the rules.

Once a challenge has been made and accepted, the two duelists must agree on a place and time for their encounter, as well as on whether the duel will be lethal or nonlethal. The choice of the dueling ground is traditionally the prerogative of the challenged party. On the day of the duel, both combatants follow specific procedures.

1. Neither party is permitted to be under the effect of any spell or any magic item until the time of the duel.
2. At the appointed hour, the presiding judge or official gives some sign that the duel has begun. Roll initiative.
3. First round: Each duelist casts any spell that can be cast so as to affect only himself. Most duelists use this round to prepare the best magical defense they can manage.
4. Second round: Each duelist readies an action, usually to counterspell in the following round.
5. Third round: Begin dueling.
6. The duel ends when one of the combatants yields, is knocked unconscious, or is otherwise rendered unable to continue.

The duel is structured so that each participant is guaranteed an opportunity to prepare a defense and can get ready to counter an enemy's first spell, regardless of who wins initiative. Of course, a duelist might not actually use a readied action to counterspell during the third round. The winner of initiative probably launches an attack instead. But the point is that neither duelist is finished by simply losing initiative—if you go second in a spell duel, you still have the opportunity to cast a defensive spell, and you have the opportunity to snuff out whatever spell your faster opponent tries first by using your readied counterspell.

In some dueling traditions, the official declares mandatory pauses in the duel after every three attack spells exchanged, providing both combatants with an opportunity to tend to their defenses again or ready another action to counterspell.

The Living Game

by Bill Slavicsek, Director of RPG R&D

D&D is a living game. It grows. It evolves. It changes every day it gets played. This concept is so important, so fundamental to the nature of D&D, that I've spoken about it at length at conventions year in and year out since the launch of 3rd Edition. This volume makes a great place to collect those thoughts and touch on the subject one more time—at least until the next time an opportunity presents itself to talk about it again.

What do I mean by a living game? A living game has few, if any, boundaries. It has a structure, but that structure is designed to expand; it isn't rigid and set. From the moment we "finished" the rules (and I use that term lightly), we began to see ways to add to the game, to improve the game, to take what we learned in the creation process and reexamine it as we played. Few other forms of entertainment have this built-in evolution mechanic, and it's what makes D&D so vibrant and so exciting. And even more exciting, we (as the original creators) have only a minor stake in this evolution. Change, growth, and improvement really come from the tens of thousands of game groups playing the game. In other words, the catalyst for change is you!

A board game can play differently each time you break it out of its box, depending on the strategies employed and the players involved, but by its nature, it can't go beyond the confines of the game board, the play pieces, or the fundamental rules of the game. The same is true of computer games. For a computer game to evolve, it must be reprogrammed, and even minor updates require tons of work before the end user notices any change. RPGs, and D&D specifically, work at a whole other level.

At its core, D&D is a very personalized game. Sure, we have a common set of rules to abide by. There have always been watershed adventures that a significant portion of us play through to create a shared experience. But otherwise, your D&D game is different from my D&D game.

The choices that players make for their characters provide the first of these differentials. From class selection to feats to skills to ability scores, the mix of players and player characters make your game unique. Even if two separate groups had exactly identical player characters, just the fact that different people were playing those characters would make the two games radically different. To me, that's exciting in a way that can't be matched by any computer game.

The Dungeon Master directly influences another significant difference through campaign setting choice, adventure selection, monster choices, and other elements related to story and setting. Even if we're both playing in an EBERRON campaign, we could be in disparate parts of the world, following different plots and subplots, and tackling different villains and villainous organizations. More often, DMs build unique campaigns using material from the official campaign settings that we publish, further widening the gap between experiences from one game group to another.

So, these differences between games and game groups showcase one aspect of the living game. From the moment a DM or player picks up the core rulebooks and interacts with them, the D&D game begins to change. D&D isn't a static game that lives only between the covers of its books. The books, with their rules and stories, provide structure and balance—but the game itself comes alive when DMs and players get together. The game lives and breathes as imaginations spark and dice roll. Whether you're a pure roleplayer or a crunchy all-about-the-combat player, your interaction with the DM's setting and the other players create a story and game that is uniquely your own. And it's alive!

Which leads to the other aspect of the living game: the rules themselves. Because we built D&D to expand, it is by necessity alive. Every new book we produce offers new options for game play that add to the fundamental structure of the game. New classes and prestige classes, new feats, new spells, new monsters, new settings, new organizations, new locations . . . you name it, we make it, and it all adds up to more choices to make your game exactly what you want it to be. But while the rules begin with us, they certainly don't end within the walls of Wizards of the Coast.

When books are published, the rules see play at a scale that no amount of playtesting can match. As the tens of thousands of game groups put the rules through their paces, stress fractures begin to appear. Let's face it, some rules wind up being broken. But other times, better ideas begin to appear as rules for specific situations get applied. This is one of the most exciting and invigorating aspects of the living game—the game rules evolve as the game gets played.

We gather feedback from a wide variety of sources. We watch the message boards (on our site and on other sites). We conduct surveys. We run focus groups. We sift through email and rules questions. And we play the game ourselves—because it's work and because it's also the hobby that we love. Through these venues, we update errata, clarify rules, and make the D&D game even better than it was. The process of evolution and continuous improvement has led to every new edition of the game, and it shows that the audience has as much influence on the way D&D develops as the designers, developers, and editors who work on it.

Say it with me—D&D is a living game. It's an exciting, vibrant, evolving, and constantly changing entertainment experience unparalleled by anything else out there, because the creators and audience jointly inspire this change. That's powerful. That's unique. And it's really, really fun. At the end of the day, that's what D&D is all about.

Long live the living game! Long live D&D!

Cover

One of the best defenses available is cover. By taking cover, you can protect yourself from attacks, especially ranged attacks, and also from being spotted.

DETERMINING COVER

To determine whether your target has cover from your ranged attack, choose a corner of your square. If any line from this corner to any corner of the target's square passes through a square or border that blocks line of effect or provides cover, or through a square occupied by a creature, the target has cover.

When you make a melee attack against an adjacent target, your target has cover if any line from your square to the target's square intersects a wall, including a low wall. When making a melee attack against a target that isn't adjacent to you (such as with a reach weapon), use the rules for determining cover from ranged attacks.

Big Creatures

Any creature that has a space larger than 5 feet (1 square) determines cover against melee attacks slightly differently than smaller creatures do. Such a creature can choose any square that it occupies to determine if an opponent has cover against its melee attacks. Similarly, when making a melee attack against such a creature, you can pick any of the squares it occupies to determine if it has cover against you.

Low Obstacles

A low obstacle, such as a wall no higher than half your height, provides cover, but only to creatures within 30 feet (6 squares) of it. An attacker who is closer to the obstacle than the target is can ignore the cover.

EFFECTS OF COVER

Cover grants you a +4 bonus to AC, as well as a +2 bonus on Reflex saves against attacks that originate or burst out from a point on the other side of the cover from you. Spread effects extend around corners and thus negate this cover bonus (see Spread, page 134).

The DM can impose other penalties or restrictions on attacks, depending on the details of the cover. For example, to strike effectively through a narrow opening, you need to use a long piercing weapon, such as an arrow or a spear. A battleaxe just isn't going to get through an arrow slit.

Attacks of Opportunity

You can't make attacks of opportunity against an opponent with cover relative to you.

Hide Checks

You can use cover to make a Hide check. Without cover, you usually need concealment to make a Hide check.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF COVER

Cover can be better or worse than described in Effects of Cover. Other forms of cover are detailed here. Regardless, multiple forms of cover don't stack—only the best form of cover applies.

Improved Cover

In some cases, cover can provide a greater bonus to AC and Reflex saves. For instance, a creature peering around a corner or through an arrow slit has even better cover than a creature standing behind a low wall or an obstacle. In such situations, the DM can double the normal cover bonuses to AC and Reflex saves. A creature with this improved cover effectively

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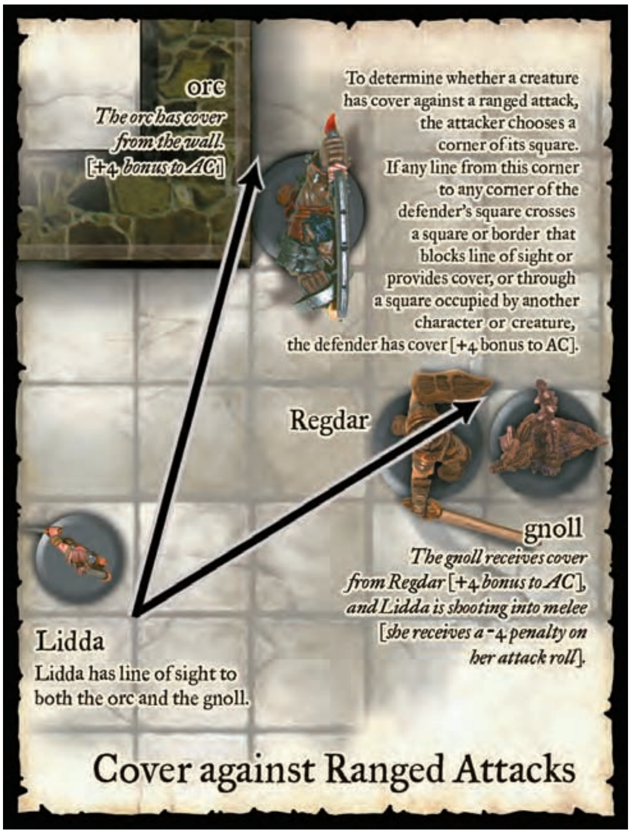


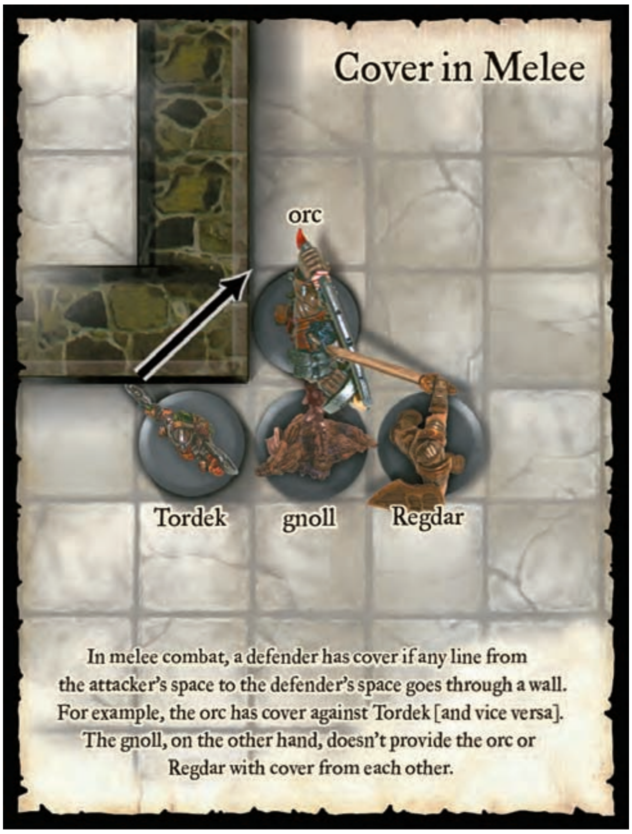
The orc has cover from the wall. [+4 bonus to AC]

To determine whether a creature has cover against a ranged attack, the attacker chooses a corner of its square. If any line from this corner to any corner of the defender's square crosses a square or border that blocks line of sight or provides cover, or through a square occupied by another character or creature, the defender has cover [+4 bonus to AC].

The gnoll receives cover from Regdar [+4 bonus to AC], and Lidda is shooting into melee [she receives a -4 penalty on her attack roll].

Lidda has line of sight to both the orc and the gnoll.

Cover against Ranged Attacks


Cover in Melee

In melee combat, a defender has cover if any line from the attacker's space to the defender's space goes through a wall. For example, the orc has cover against Tordek [and vice versa]. The gnoll, on the other hand, doesn't provide the orc or Regdar with cover from each other.

gains improved evasion against any attack to which the Reflex save bonus applies. Furthermore, improved cover provides a +10 bonus on Hide checks.

Limited Cover

Some objects that don't occupy a whole square, such as tree trunks and pillars, provide limited cover. If you're standing in the same square as such an object, you gain a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves. The presence of such an object doesn't otherwise affect your fighting space, because you're using the object to your advantage when you can.

Soft Cover

Creatures, even your enemies, can provide you with cover against ranged attacks. However, such soft cover provides no bonus on Reflex saves, nor does soft cover allow you to make a Hide check.

Total Cover

If you don't have line of effect to your target, that target is considered to have total cover from you. You can't make an attack against a target that has total cover. A spread might still affect a creature that has total cover, if the spread's area allows the effect to cover the distance.

TAKING COVER

The concept of cover adds realism to combat, allowing tactical choices that didn't really exist in previous versions of D&D. As the 3e game evolved, we spent some time grappling with how cover should work. In the end, the 3.5 version of cover was much simpler than 3.0's.

Determining degrees of cover, as the 3.0 rules required, could be difficult and make combats last longer. In the end, we found the degree of cover didn't make a substantial difference in most cases. In addition, when we began designing the *D&D Miniatures Game,* we had to streamline a number of rules to let skirmishes move quickly and efficiently. One of these rules was cover, which ended up being adopted in the 3.5 version of the D&D rules.

We moved the 3.0 rule of striking cover to an optional rule in the 3.5 *Dungeon Master's Guide*. An AC bonus already existed for cover, and a penalty already existed for shooting into melee. Requiring the additional calculation was a time-consuming way to penalize those who were inadvertently providing cover.

Then came the issue of hard and soft cover. The 3.0 rules didn't distinguish, which led to some unintended results, such as characters getting bonuses on Reflex saves by standing behind their allies. So 3.5 revised the rules to explicitly prevent such abuses.

—Jennifer Clarke Wilkes, editor

Critical Hits

A critical hit is an attack that deals more damage, indicating a hit to a vital area. Certain creatures are immune to extra damage from critical hits because they don't have vital organs, points of weakness, or differentiation from one portion of the body to another.

DETERMINING A CRITICAL HIT

When you make an attack roll and get a natural 20 (the d20 shows 20), you hit regardless of your target's Armor Class, and you have scored a threat. The hit might be a critical hit (or "crit"). To find out if it is a critical hit, you immediately make a critical roll—another attack roll with all the same modifiers as the attack roll you just made. If the critical roll also results in a hit against the target's AC, your original hit is a critical hit. (The critical roll just needs to hit to give you a crit. It doesn't need to come up 20 again.) If the critical roll is a miss, then your hit is just a regular hit.

Increased Threat Range

Sometimes you can score a threat on a natural roll that is lower than 20. In such cases, you have an increased threat range. Longswords, for instance, give you a threat on a natural attack roll of 19 or 20 (the d20 shows 19 or 20). In such cases, a roll of lower than 20 isn't an automatic hit. Any attack roll that doesn't result in a hit isn't a threat.

Illus. by K. Walker

Spells and Critical Hits

A spell that requires an attack roll can score a critical hit. A spell that requires no attack roll can't score a critical hit even if it deals damage.

CRITICAL HIT RESULTS

A critical hit means that you roll your damage more than once, with all your usual bonuses, and add the rolls together. Unless otherwise specified, the threat range for a critical hit on an attack roll is 20, and the multiplier is ×2.

Extra Damage

Extra damage beyond a weapon's normal damage, such as that dealt by precision damage abilities (see page 42) or the flaming property of a flaming sword, isn't multiplied when you score a critical hit.

Increased Critical Multiplier

Some weapons, such as battleaxes and arrows, deal more than double damage on a critical hit.

Damage Reduction

A creature that has damage reduction (DR) ignores some of the hit point damage from weapons, natural weapons, and unarmed attacks that don't meet certain criteria. Wounds heal immediately, or the weapon bounces off harmlessly, and the attacker knows the attack was ineffective. Damage reduction doesn't reduce the damage from energy attacks, spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities. Nor does it affect poisons or diseases delivered by inhalation, ingestion, or contact.

Whenever damage reduction completely negates the damage from an attack, it also negates most special effects that accompany the attack, such as injury poison and injury disease. Attacks that deal no damage because of the target's DR can't distract a creature from concentrating.

STACKING DAMAGE REDUCTION

If a creature has damage reduction from more than one source, the two forms of damage reduction don't stack. Instead, the creature gets the benefit of the best damage reduction that applies to a given situation.

OVERCOMING DAMAGE REDUCTION

A DR entry denotes the amount of damage ignored (usually 5 to 15 points) followed by a slash and the type of damage, material, or magic that overcomes the DR. If a weapon or attack doesn't have the indicated quality or qualities, that attack has its damage reduced by the number before the slash to a minimum of 0 points of damage. Possible ways to overcome damage reduction include the following.

Aligned

Some damage reduction can be overcome by chaotic-, evil-, good-, or lawful-aligned weapons, indicated by an entry such as DR 5/lawful. Other than the inherent abilities of some magic weapons, an aligned weapon can be acquired through an *align weapon* spell or from an alignment subtype (see Aligned Strike, page 100). Damage reduction that can be overcome only by aligned weapons is supernatural.

Ammunition fired from a projectile weapon that has an alignment gains the alignment of that projectile weapon, in addition to any alignment the ammunition already has.

Damage Type

Bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage can overcome some damage reduction. A humble club, which deals bludgeoning damage, overcomes DR such as 5/bludgeoning. This kind of damage reduction is extraordinary.

Epic

Weapons that have a magical enhancement bonus of +6 or higher can overcome epic damage reduction. An "epic weapon" isn't enough. This type of damage reduction is supernatural. If a creature has this kind of damage reduction, such as DR 5/epic, it also has the epic strike ability (see page 100).

Ammunition fired from a projectile weapon that has an enhancement bonus of +6 or higher can overcome epic damage reduction.

Magic

When magic can overcome a creature's damage reduction, a weapon that has a +1 or higher magical enhancement bonus is required. If a creature has this kind of damage reduction, such as DR 5/magic, it also has the magic strike ability (see page 101). This kind of damage reduction is supernatural.

Ammunition fired from a projectile weapon that has an enhancement bonus of +1 or higher is treated as magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Nothing

When a DR entry has a dash after the slash, such as DR 5/—, no weapon can overcome it. Insurmountable damage reduction is extraordinary.

Special Material

A special material, such as adamantine, alchemical silver, or cold iron, is required to overcome other forms of damage reduction. For example, potent fey have DR that can be overcome only by cold iron. Damage reduction that can be overcome only by adamantine is extraordinary; DR that can be overcome only by cold iron or alchemical silver is supernatural.

Special Situations

A few kinds of damage reduction can be overcome by more than one factor. This kind of DR appears with the word "or" between qualities, such as DR 5/cold iron or good. A cold iron weapon or a good-aligned weapon can overcome such DR.

Other forms of damage reduction can be overcome only by attacks that combine qualities. This kind of DR appears with the word "and" between qualities, such as DR 5/silver and good. A weapon that falls into one category but not the other is of no help in overcoming such damage reduction—the weapon must have all the indicated qualities to be effective.

In these cases, the damage reduction is supernatural if any quality required to overcome it is considered part of a supernatural form of DR. Otherwise, the damage reduction is extraordinary.

EVOLUTION OF DR

In prior editions of D&D, some monsters could only be hit by weapons with a certain magic bonus or better—anything less simply had no effect. It was a lot like a sign at an amusement park: "You must be at least this tall to fight this monster."

Damage reduction was a big improvement. It said you could hurt a monster with an inferior weapon, but you'd just do less damage. In practice, though, damage reduction values were so high that it was very difficult to damage a monster without the right weapon.

In the 3.5 revision, we made damage reduction more flavorful and easier to overcome. With a variety of methods to overcome DR, special materials and weapon types became more important. And we lowered damage reduction numbers so you have a hope of dealing damage even without the right weapon.

—James Wyatt, designer

Damage Types

Damage types include kinds of weapon damage and categories of energy damage, as well as special types of damage from specific sorts of attacks. Some monsters are resistant or immune to attacks from certain types of damage, while others are more vulnerable to certain types of damage. For these reasons, damage type can be important.

WEAPONS

Weapons and natural weapons are classified according to the type of damage they deal, which can be bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing.

ENERGY

Abilities and effects that employ one of the five energy types deal energy damage, which can be acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic.

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

Negative energy and positive energy are damage types, but they are not considered energy types the way that acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic are.

PRECISION DAMAGE

A number of abilities in the game allow a creature to deal extra damage by striking a vital area. This category of abilities includes sneak attack and other abilities that work like it, such as a ninja's sudden strike (*Complete Adventurer* 8) and scout's skirmish (*Complete Adventurer* 12). For the sake of simplicity, the extra damage such abilities deal is referred to as precision damage. Several factors are important to keep in mind regarding this sort of damage.

- Precision damage applies on any attack that meets the requirements of the ability that grants the damage. This includes multiple attacks made during a full attack. If conditions somehow change between multiple attacks, attacks that not longer meet the ability's requirements can't deal precision damage.
- An attacker can deal precision damage with any weapon he can wield, but he must wield that weapon in the optimal way. If an attacker takes the –4 penalty to deal nonlethal damage with a lethal weapon, for example, no precision damage is possible.
- Ranged attacks can deal precision damage only if the range is 30 feet or less.
- Precision damage applies only against living creatures that have discernible anatomies. Undead, constructs, deathless, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures are not subject to precision damage, and creatures that are not subject to critical hits are not subject to precision damage.
- To deal precision damage, the attacker must see (or otherwise sense) the target accurately enough to pick out a vital spot. Any degree of concealment foils the ability to deal precision damage.
- To deal precision damage, an attacker must be able to reach the target's vital spots. If the attacker can't do so, he can't deal precision damage.
- If the bonus damage from a precision damage ability is expressed as extra dice of damage, the damage from those dice is never multiplied when the attack receives a damage multiplier (such as from a critical hit).
- A form of attack that enables an attacker to make multiple attacks during an action other than a full-round action, such as the Manyshot feat (standard action) or a quickened *scorching ray* (swift action), allows precision damage to be applied only to the first attack in the group.

Illus. by D. Hudnut

Delay

Delaying is useful if you need to see what others are going to do before deciding what to do yourself. The price you pay is the change in initiative count and lost time. You never get back the time you spend waiting to see what's going to happen. While delaying, you can't interrupt anyone else's turn the way you can with a readied action.

HOW TO DELAY

By choosing to delay, you take no action on your regular turn, then act normally on whatever initiative count you decide. You voluntarily change your initiative count for the rest of the combat. You can specify this new initiative count, or you can just wait until a certain time and act then.

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAYING

When you act, your initiative count changes to the one on which you acted. Your initiative count is lower for the rest of the combat if you acted later in the same round during which you decided to delay. If you take your delayed action in the round after the one during which you chose to delay, but before your original initiative count comes up, your initiative count rises to the one on which you acted for the rest of the combat. You don't get the turn that would have occurred on your original initiative count.

Illus. by M. Cavotta

THOSE WHO HESITATE, WIN

Some say that battles are won or lost on initiative, but that's not always true. Sometimes it's best to keep your options open and choose your moment, rather than letting it choose you.

Delay is a spellcaster's best friend. You've won the initiative, but the bad guys are still milling around, scattered and unaware? Delay until they've noticed you and run into the perfect formation for your favorite area spell.

Delay is a fighter's best friend. Your every instinct might be screaming for you to rush into combat, but if you can just hold out long enough for your sorcerer's *fireball* to soften up the foe or for your cleric's *bless* to give you some extra oomph, your patience will pay off.

Delay is a rogue's best friend. Granted, it's always better to get the drop on a flatfooted enemy . . . but when you can't, delay until your fighter buddy engages a foe and sets up a flank. She's scarier-looking than you are and presents a much more threatening target to an enemy, at least until that sneak attack hits.

Delay is a cleric's best friend. Someone's going to get hurt badly this round, but you don't know who. Your attack options just aren't going to cut it for this fight, and you know from past experience that keeping the barbarian or the wizard up and causing mass destruction is more effective than a smack or two from your mace. If you delay, you can be at a wounded or downed ally's side, cast a healing spell, and have him up and fighting again without a wasted round in between.

But the best thing about delay is the look on the DM's face when he goes around the table asking for actions . . . and everyone except for you delays, waiting on your move. It's your moment to set the tone for the battle, to take the definitive action that will carry your team to victory. You're the star, and success rests on your action. Make it count!

—Michele Carter, editor

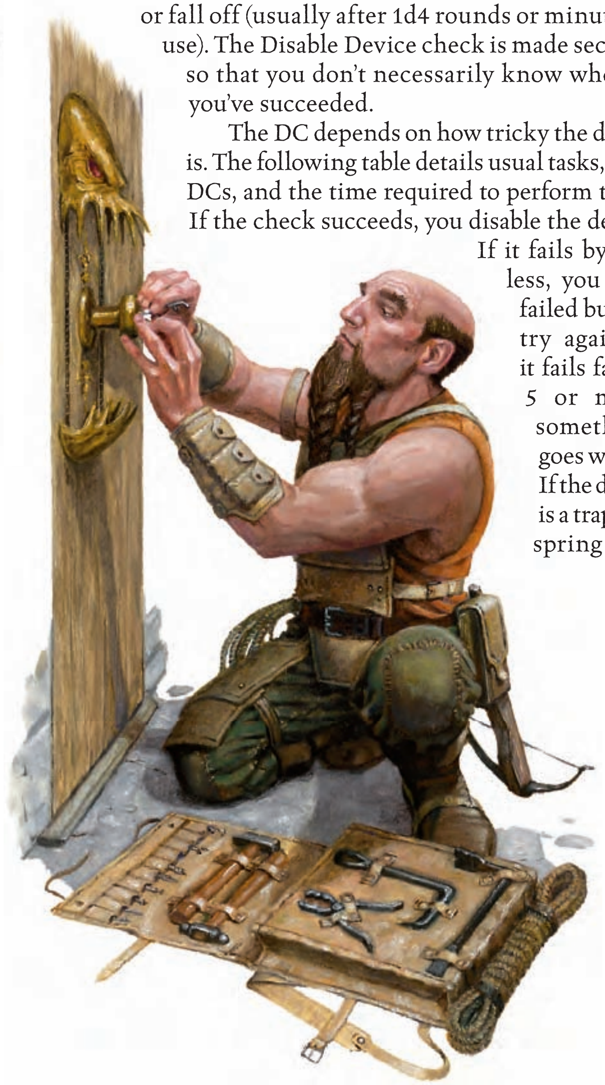
Disable Device and Open Lock

Those with specialized training can disable or bypass certain protective mechanisms.

DISABLE DEVICE (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

If you have ranks in Disable Device, you can use this skill, along with appropriate tools, to disarm a trap, jam a lock, or tinker with the functioning of some other contraption. You can also rig simple devices, such as saddles or wagon wheels, to work normally for a while and then fail or fall off (usually after 1d4 rounds or minutes of use). The Disable Device check is made secretly, so that you don't necessarily know whether you've succeeded.

The DC depends on how tricky the device is. The following table details usual tasks, their DCs, and the time required to perform them. If the check succeeds, you disable the device. If it fails by 4 or less, you have failed but can try again. If it fails fail by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If the device is a trap, you spring it. If you're attempting some sort of sabotage, you think the device is disabled, but it still works normally.



Illus. by S. Belledin

Those who have the trapfinding class feature and beat a trap's DC by 10 or more can study a trap, figure out how it works, and bypass it (along with their companions) without disarming it. Such a character can also disarm magic traps.

Disable Device

Difficulty	Time	DC
Simple	1 round	10
Tricky	1d4 rounds	15
Difficult	2d4 rounds	20
Wicked	2d4 rounds	25
Magic trap[1]	2d4 rounds	25 + spell level

[1] Requires the trapfinding class feature.

Conditions	DC Modifier
Insert bypass element	+10
Leave behind no trace of your tampering	+5
No thieves' tools	+2
Reduce time to disable to 1 round	+20

Difficulty

A simple task includes jamming a lock, while a tricky one might be to sabotage a wagon wheel to fall off. Difficult and wicked devices are complex traps or clockwork machines. A magic trap can be a magic item, or it can be created by a spell according to that spell's description.

Insert Bypass Element

You try to incorporate a bypass element. If you succeed, you not only bypass a trap without disarming it, you also add a bypass element allowing you or your companions to avoid triggering the trap again later.

OPEN LOCK (DEX; TRAINED ONLY)

If you have ranks in Open lock, you can use thieves' tools to pick a lock as a full-round action.

Open Lock

Lock	DC
Very simple lock	20
Average lock	25
Good lock	30
Amazing lock	40

Condition	DC Modifier
No thieves' tools	+2
Open lock as a move action	+20

OPEN A LOCK, OR DISABLE IT?

If you have the skill to disable traps of every imaginable variety, including magic traps, why can't you understand how to disable a simple mechanical lock? The answer, of course, is legacy. The 2nd Edition of the game distinguished between the skills, and so 3rd Edition did as well. One possible solution is to ignore this and make Disable Device work on locks.

An average lock is DC 25 to open. That means you have to invest a lot in the Open Lock skill to be effective. However, the investment is likely to be moot when the barbarian bashes open all the locked doors. Just to rub salt in the wound, the wizard has a 2nd-level spell that opens locks regardless of the difficulty of picking them. When you can reliably open locks without taking 20, the party likely no longer needs you to do so.

Have more fun by putting your skill points elsewhere, such as in Tumble. That way you can get out of the scrapes you'll inevitably get into when the barbarian breaks open all those doors.

—Matthew Sernett, designer

Disarm

As a melee attack, you can attempt to disarm your opponent. If you're attempting to disarm, follow the steps outlined here. Taking a held object that isn't a melee weapon from an opponent requires the same sort of disarm attempt, as does grabbing an item the foe is wearing. You can't use disarm against a natural weapon.

INITIATING A DISARM

When you attempt a disarm, you declare the item you're trying to disarm, and you provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender—the creature you're trying to disarm. If the defender's attack of opportunity deals any damage, your disarm attempt fails. Otherwise, you and the defender make opposed melee attack rolls with your respective weapons or items.

A wielder that is wielding a one-handed or two-handed weapon with two hands during a disarm attempt gets a +4 bonus on this attack roll, and the wielder of a light weapon takes a –4 penalty even if wielding that weapon with two hands. Unarmed strikes and natural weapons are considered light weapons, so you always take a penalty when trying to disarm an opponent while using one of these. If the combatants are of different sizes, the larger one receives a bonus on the attack roll of +4 per size category larger. If the targeted item isn't a melee weapon, the defender takes a –4 penalty on the roll.

RESOLVING A DISARM

If you beat the defender, the defender is disarmed. If you attempted the disarm while unarmed, whether you're considered armed or not, you now have the weapon or item you targeted. The weapon is on the ground in the defender's space if you used a weapon for your disarm attempt.

If the defender wins and is considered armed with a melee weapon, that creature can immediately react and attempt to disarm you. This attempt doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity from you. If the defender fails its disarm attempt, you don't subsequently get a free disarm attempt against it.

Grabbing Items

You can use a disarm to snatch an item worn by the target. If you want to have the item in your hand, the disarm must be made as an unarmed attack. If the item is poorly secured or otherwise easy to snatch or cut away, such as a loose cloak or a brooch pinned to the front of a tunic, you get a +4 bonus. Unlike on a normal disarm attempt, failing the attempt doesn't allow the defender to attempt to disarm you. This otherwise functions identically to a disarm attempt.

You can't snatch an item that is well secured, such as a ring or bracelet, unless you have pinned its wearer. Even then, that defender gains a +4 bonus on the attack roll to resist the disarm attempt.

Illus. by S. Wood

TACTICAL DISARMING

Disarming can seem like a bad tactic. First you make an attack that can't deal damage, which the defender can negate with a roll. If you succeed, the weapon drops at its owner's feet, and that foe can just pick the weapon up as a move action. Then he can attack you with it just fine. You probably get an attack of opportunity against the enemy when he picks up the weapon, but you could have just made a normal attack. Despite all this, disarming can be crippling when used in the right situation.

- If the foe can make multiple attacks with the weapon, picking it up means he can't make a full attack.
- If you were unarmed when you disarmed the enemy, you can grab the weapon, thus preventing the foe from using it.
- If any of your allies are adjacent to the disarmed opponent, they each get an attack of opportunity when the foe retrieves the weapon.
- If your adversary is using many melee weapons, you can use multiple attacks to get rid of a few weapons instead of one. Your opponent will have to use as many move actions to pick them all up, likely becoming less effective until he does.

If you use any of these tactics, keep in mind that a creature that has natural weapons doesn't become much less effective when relieved of manufactured weapons. Rendering a marilith weaponless is a great accomplishment, but she still has six potent slams and a tail attack.

—Matthew Sernett, designer

Disease

Adventurers explore dangerous and often filthy environments, where disease thrives or is carried by creatures. Although supernatural diseases exist, disease is usually an extraordinary effect.

DAMAGE FROM DISEASE

When you're exposed to a disease, you must make an immediate Fortitude saving throw against a DC specified in the disease;s description. If the save succeeds, you didn't catch the disease, and it has no effect. If the save fails, you begin to take damage after an incubation period detailed in the disease's description. Once per day afterward, you must succeed on a Fortitude saving throw to avoid the disease's damage. Two successful saving throws in a row indicate that you have fought off the disease. You recover, taking no more damage.

The DM can roll the initial Fortitude save for you, so that you don't know whether you caught the disease.

DISEASE TYPES

Diseases are divided into four types, according to the method by which their effect is delivered.

Contact

Touching something containing this type of disease necessitates a saving throw. A weapon attack or a touch attack can also deliver it. (In this respect, a contact disease is the same as an injury disease.) Even if a creature has sufficient damage reduction to avoid taking any damage from the attack, the disease can still affect it.

Illus. by W. Mahy

Ingested

Ingested disease must be consumed, usually as part of contaminated food or water. Most ingested diseases can also be inhaled.

Inhaled

Inhaled diseases are airborne in an area. Holding one's breath is ineffective against inhaled diseases; they affect the nasal membranes, tear ducts, and other parts of the body. Most inhaled diseases can also be ingested.

Injury

This type of disease must be delivered through a wound, which can be as small as a fleabite. If a creature has sufficient damage reduction to avoid taking any damage from the attack, the disease doesn't affect it.

TREATING DISEASE

Use of the Heal skill can help a diseased creature. If a diseased creature is in a healer's care and has spent the previous 8 hours resting, every time it makes a saving throw against disease effects, the healer makes a check. The diseased creature can use a higher Heal check result in place of its saving throw result.

Creatures recover points lost to ability score damage at a rate of 1 per day per ability damaged, and this rule applies even while a disease progresses. A creature that has a disease might be able to withstand the malady without accumulating any damage.

DISEASE IMMUNITY

Unless otherwise noted in its description, a creature can't be infected by any disease it can pass on as a special attack. Other creatures can be immune to disease according to their description or type.

SPREADING THE DISEASE

The disease rules can be tough to use—not because the rules themselves are difficult or complex, but because diseases don't seem to have much effect on play. Bolstering Fortitude saves, resting, and using *lesser restoration* or *remove disease* spells make defeating the disease too easy. Some diseases, such as mummy rot, are more dangerous, but at the level you face them, you typically have the means to get rid of them easily.

If you want diseases to be more interesting in play, try making them all communicated by contact. If creatures risk infection simply by touching a victim, a disease can spread dangerously fast. Perhaps the disease doesn't affect the PCs' abilities any more than normal, but it will likely have greater roleplaying implications among the PCs and in their interactions with NPCs.

—Matthew Sernett, designer

Encumbrance

Encumbrance rules determine how much a creature can carry before slowing down. A creature can be encumbered by armor and encumbered by weight.

ENCUMBRANCE BY ARMOR

A creature's armor defines, among other statistics, armor check penalty, overall speed, and running speed. Unless the creature is weak or carrying a lot of gear, that's all you need to know. The extra gear doesn't slow the creature down any more than the armor already does. If a creature is weak or carrying a lot of gear, however, you should calculate encumbrance by weight.

ENCUMBRANCE BY WEIGHT

If you want to determine encumbrance by weight, total the weight of everything a creature is carrying and wearing. Compare this total to the creature's Strength on the Carrying Capacity table to determine if the load is light, medium, or heavy. A light load doesn't encumber. Medium and heavy loads affect maximum Dexterity bonus to AC, carry a check penalty that works like an armor check penalty, reduce speed, and affect running speed, as shown on the Carrying Loads table. The Reduced Speed table provides reduced speed figures for base speeds from 40 feet to 100 feet. A medium or heavy load also counts as medium or heavy armor for the purpose of abilities and skills that are restricted by armor.

If a creature is wearing armor and carrying a load, use the worst figure for each category. Don't stack the penalties.

SIZE, SHAPE, AND ENCUMBRANCE

The figures on the Carrying Capacity table are for Medium bipedal creatures. A larger bipedal creature can carry more weight, depending on its size category, as follows: Large ×2, Huge ×4, Gargantuan ×8, Colossal ×16. A smaller creature can carry less weight, depending on its size category, as follows: Small ×3/4, Tiny ×1/2, Diminutive ×1/4, Fine ×1/8.

Quadrupeds can carry heavier loads. Instead of the multipliers given above, multiply the value corresponding to the creature's Strength score from the Carrying Capacity table by the appropriate modifier, as follows: Fine ×1/4, Diminutive ×1/2, Tiny ×3/4, Small ×1, Medium ×1-1/2, Large ×3, Huge ×6, Gargantuan ×12, Colossal ×24.

TREMENDOUS STRENGTH

For Strength scores not shown on the Carrying Capacity table, find the Strength score between 20 and 29 that has the same number in the "ones" digit as the creature's Strength score does. Multiply the figures by 4 if the creature's Strength is in the 30s, 16 if it's in the 40s, 64 if it's in the 50s, and so on.

LIFTING AND DRAGGING

A creature can lift up to its maximum load over its head. A creature can lift up to double its maximum load off the ground. While lifting double its maximum load, a creature is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC and can move only 5 feet per round as a full-round action.

A creature can push or drag along the ground as much as five times its maximum load. Favorable conditions, such as being on smooth ground or dragging a slick object, can double these numbers. Bad circumstances, such as being on broken ground or pushing an object that snags, can reduce them to half or lower.

CARRYING CAPACITY

Str	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load
1	up to 3 lb.	4–6 lb.	7–10 lb.
2	up to 6 lb.	7–13 lb.	14–20 lb.
3	up to 10 lb.	11–20 lb.	21–30 lb.
4	up to 13 lb.	14–26 lb.	27–40 lb.
5	up to 16 lb.	17–33 lb.	34–50 lb.
6	up to 20 lb.	21–40 lb.	41–60 lb.
7	up to 23 lb.	24–46 lb.	47–70 lb.
8	up to 26 lb.	27–53 lb.	54–80 lb.
9	up to 30 lb.	31–60 lb.	61–90 lb.
10	up to 33 lb.	34–66 lb.	67–100 lb.
11	up to 38 lb.	39–76 lb.	77–115 lb.
12	up to 43 lb.	44–86 lb.	87–130 lb.
13	up to 50 lb.	51–100 lb.	101–150 lb.
14	up to 58 lb.	59–116 lb.	117–175 lb.
15	up to 66 lb.	67–133 lb.	134–200 lb.
16	up to 76 lb.	77–153 lb.	154–230 lb.
17	up to 86 lb.	87–173 lb.	174–260 lb.
18	up to 100 lb.	101–200 lb.	201–300 lb.
19	up to 116 lb.	117–233 lb.	234–350 lb.
20	up to 133 lb.	134–266 lb.	267–400 lb.
21	up to 153 lb.	154–306 lb.	307–460 lb.
22	up to 173 lb.	174–346 lb.	347–520 lb.
23	up to 200 lb.	201–400 lb.	401–600 lb.
24	up to 233 lb.	234–466 lb.	467–700 lb.
25	up to 266 lb.	267–533 lb.	534–800 lb.
26	up to 306 lb.	307–613 lb.	614–920 lb.
27	up to 346 lb.	347–693 lb.	694–1,040 lb.
28	up to 400 lb.	401–800 lb.	801–1,200 lb.
29	up to 466 lb.	467–933 lb.	934–1,400 lb.
+10	—see Tremendous Strength—		

CARRYING LOADS

			—— Speed ——		
Load	Max Dex	Check Penalty	(30 ft.)	(20 ft.)	Run
Medium	+3	–3	20 ft.	15 ft.	×4
Heavy	+1	–6	20 ft.	15 ft.	×3

REDUCED SPEED

Base Speed	Reduced Speed
40 ft.	30 ft.
50 ft.	35 ft.
60 ft.	40 ft.
70 ft.	50 ft.
80 ft.	55 ft.
90 ft.	60 ft.
100 ft.	70 ft.

Energy

Some effects use or create energy, dealing damage according to the type of energy used. Energy comes in five types: acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic. The types of energy help to determine whether certain creatures are more resistant or more vulnerable to the attack that uses the energy.

IMMUNITY TO ENERGY

A creature that has immunity to energy is never harmed by that energy. A creature that is immune to fire usually has vulnerability to cold—see Vulnerability to Energy. Creatures that are immune to cold typically have vulnerability to fire.

RESISTANCE TO ENERGY

A creature that has resistance to energy has the ability (usually extraordinary) to ignore some damage of a certain energy type each time it takes damage of that type.

Each resistance is defined by what energy type it resists and how many points of damage are resisted. For instance, if a creature has resistance to fire 10, it can ignore the first 10 points of fire damage it takes from each attack. The source of the damage, mundane or magical, doesn't matter. When resistance completely negates the damage from an energy attack, that attack can't force a Concentration check.

Multiple sources of resistance to a certain energy type don't stack with each other. Only the highest value applies to any given attack.

VULNERABILITY TO ENERGY

Some creatures have vulnerability to a certain type of energy. Such a creature takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from effects that employ that energy, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Some forms of energy can have other effects.

Acid Effects

Corrosive acid deals 1d6 points of damage per round of exposure. Total immersion in acid deals 10d6 points of damage per round.

The fumes from most acids are inhaled poisons. Those who come close enough to a large body of acid to dunk a creature in it are exposed to the fumes. Such creatures must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Constitution damage. If the first save fails, the creature must succeed on a second save 1 minute later or take another 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

Creatures immune to acid might still drown in it (see Suffocation, page 141) if they're totally immersed.

Catching on Fire

Those at risk of catching fire are allowed a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid this fate. If a creature catches on fire, it takes 1d6 points of fire damage immediately. In each subsequent round, the burning creature must make another Reflex saving throw. Failure means it takes another 1d6 points of fire damage in that round. Success means the fire has gone out and deals no more damage.

A creature that is on fire can extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to soak itself. If no body of water is at hand, rolling on the ground or smothering the fire grants another save with a +4 bonus.

Those unlucky enough to have their clothes or equipment catch fire must make a DC 15 Reflex save for each item. On a failed save, the item takes the same amount of damage as a burning creature does.

Sonic Attacks

Unless otherwise noted, a sonic attack follows the rules for spreads (see page 134). The range of the spread is measured from the creature using the sonic attack.

Not all sonic attacks deal damage, and many have effects based on whether they're heard by a creature. Once a sonic attack has taken effect, deafening the subject or stopping its ears doesn't end the effect. Stopping one's ears ahead of time allows one to avoid having to make saving throws against mind-affecting sonic attacks, but not other kinds of sonic attacks, such as those that deal damage. Stopping one's ears is a full-round action, and doing so requires wax or other soundproof material to stuff into the ears.

ACID ENERGY?

Why is acid an energy type? Well . . . look over there! A monkey!

Seriously, although acid isn't what you'd normally consider energy from a scientific standpoint, it behaves in the game very much like fire, cold, sonic, and electricity. Creatures, spells, and magic items deal acid damage. Creatures have acid resistance and immunity. Spells grant acid resistance just like they grant fire resistance. As you can see, acid behaves much more like those other damage types than like weapon damage types. Nothing in the game has resistance to bludgeoning damage—instead, some creatures have damage reduction against bludgeoning attacks. When talking about damage types, we wanted a way to refer to all the damage types that behave in a similar manner. That way we could group them conceptually and allow players to pick from them interchangeably (such as when casting the *resist energy* spell). "Energy" was the best word for that group.

—Matthew Sernett, designer

Energy Drain and Level Loss

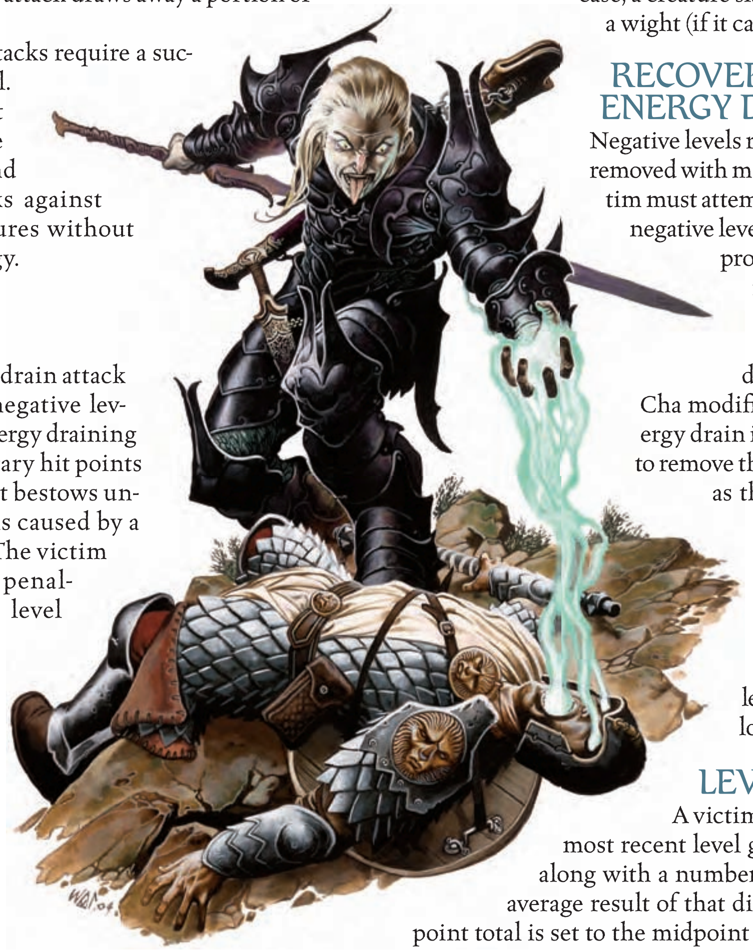
Some creatures, especially undead, possess the supernatural ability to drain living creatures (any creature not of the construct, deathless, or undead type) they strike. The creature making an energy drain attack draws away a portion of its victim's life force.

Most energy drain attacks require a successful melee attack roll. Mere physical contact isn't enough. A creature can make unarmed and natural weapon attacks against energy draining creatures without risking loss of life energy.

EFFECTS OF ENERGY DRAIN

Each successful energy drain attack bestows one or more negative levels on the victim. The energy draining creature gains 5 temporary hit points for each negative level it bestows unless the negative level is caused by a spell or similar effect. The victim takes the following penalties for each negative level it gains.

- –1 penalty on skill checks and ability checks.
- –1 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws.
- A loss of 5 hit points.
- –1 effective level: Whenever the victim's level is used in a roll or calculation, reduce it by one for each negative level.
- Spellcasters lose access to one spell as if they had cast their highest-level, currently available spell. A victim that has more than one spell at the highest level can choose which spell is lost. In addition, a victim has one less spell slot of the highest available level when next preparing spells or regaining spell slots.



Illus. by W. Reynolds

Death Due to Energy Drain

A creature that has negative levels equal to its current level or Hit Dice is instantly slain. A creature slain by energy drain in this way might rise as an undead of the same type as the energy draining creature. Such an occurrence is detailed in the energy draining creature's description. If this isn't the case, a creature slain by energy drain rises as a wight (if it can).

RECOVERING FROM ENERGY DRAIN

Negative levels remain for 24 hours or until removed with magic. After 24 hours, the victim must attempt a Fortitude save for each negative level gained. The DC is usually provided in the energy draining creature's description, and that DC is typically equal to 10 + 1/2 the energy draining creature's HD + its Cha modifier. If the source of the energy drain isn't a creature, the save DC to remove the negative level is the same as the initial save DC to avoid the energy drain.

If a saving throw succeeds, the associated negative level goes away without further effect. If the save fails, the negative level goes away, but the victim loses one level or Hit Die.

LEVEL LOSS

A victim who loses a level loses the most recent level gained, losing one Hit Die along with a number of hit points equal to the average result of that die. The victim's experience point total is set to the midpoint of the previous level. Base attack bonus, base saving throw bonuses, and class features are reduced to match the new level. As applicable, the victim loses any ability score increase, skill ranks, and feats associated with the lost level. If the exact ability score increased is unknown, remove 1 point from the highest ability score. If the skill ranks gained are unknown, remove ranks from the skills that have the most ranks. If the most recent feats gained are unknown, the victim chooses which ones to remove. A familiar or companion creature that has abilities tied to level has its abilities adjusted to fit its master's new level.

WHAT'S THAT SUCKING SOUND?

Level loss is the worst thing that can happen to a D&D character. I would rather see my character killed and eaten by a tojanida than strip him of hard-earned XP and force him to walk a step behind the rest of the party in power level—a fate that will likely result in death anyway.

In previous editions of the game, energy drain was a total screw because the player wasn't even allowed a save, and the effect was instantaneous. Fortunately, 3rd Edition designers had the wisdom to impose a set of combat penalties associated with energy drain that could be negated by magic or a save before the effects became permanent, and they also added a safeguard (the *restoration* spell). Still, the D&D game is at its worst when you have to knock your character down a peg.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

Escape Artist and Use Rope

You utilize Use Rope to bind an opponent, and you use Escape Artist to free yourself of similar bonds. But these closely related skills have other uses as well.

ESCAPE ARTIST (DEX; ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

Use this skill to slip out of bonds or manacles, wriggle through tight spaces, or escape the grip of a monster that grapples you. The following table gives the DCs to escape various forms of restraints.

Making an Escape Artist check to escape from rope bindings, manacles, or other restraints (except a grappler) requires 1 minute of work. Escaping from a net or an entangling spell is a full-round action. Escaping from a grapple or pin is a standard action. Using Escape Artist to get through a narrow space (one less than half as wide as your space) takes 1 minute for each 5 feet.

You can usually try again by taking more time when using Escape Artist in any way.

Escape Artist

Restraint	DC
Grappler	Grappler's grapple check result
Manacles	30
Masterwork manacles	35
Net or entangling spell	20
Ropes	Binder's Use Rope check result +10
Narrow space	30

Condition	DC Modifier
Quick escape	+10

Entangling Spell

Entangling spells include *animate rope* and *entangle,* among others. A spell's descriptive text always takes precedence over the DC described here.

Quick Escape

Quickly escaping from rope bindings, manacles, or other restraints (except a grappler) takes only 5 rounds of work. Escaping from a net or an entangling spell with the quick escape option is a standard action. Escaping from a grapple or pin with the quick escape option is a move action. Squeezing through a tight space takes half the time that it normally would.

USE ROPE (DEX)

With this skill, you can make firm knots and bind prisoners with ropes. The DCs for various tasks utilizing this skill are summarized on the following table.

Tying a knot, tying a special knot, or tying a rope around yourself one-handed is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. Splicing two ropes together takes 5 minutes.

Use Rope

Task	DC
Bind a creature	Varies
Secure a grappling hook[1]	10
Splice two ropes together	15
Tie a firm knot	10
Tie a rope around yourself one-handed	15
Tie a special knot	15

Condition	Check Modifier
Quickly tie[2]	–10

[1] +2 for every 10 feet the hook is thrown (max DC 20).

[2] Tie a knot or a rope around yourself one-handed as a move action rather than a full-round action.

Bind a Creature

When you bind another creature using a rope, any Escape Artist check that the bound creature makes is opposed by your Use Rope check. You get a +10 bonus on this check because it's easier to bind someone than to escape from bonds. If the creature tries to burst the rope rather than escape, use the rope's break DC (normally 23) instead of DC 10. Binding a creature takes 1 minute.

Secure a Grappling Hook

Securing a grappling hook requires a Use Rope check (DC 10, +2 for every 10 feet of distance the grappling hook is thrown, to a maximum DC of 20 at 50 feet or more). Failure by 4 or less indicates that the hook fails to catch and falls, allowing you to try again. Failure by 5 or more indicates that the grappling hook initially holds, but comes loose after 1d4 rounds of supporting weight. This check is made secretly, so that you don't know whether the rope will hold your weight.

Throwing a grappling hook is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Special Knots

A special knot performs in some special way after it's tied, such as one that slips or loosens with a tug.

DON'T HANG YOURSELF WITH IT

Use Rope checks are really annoying to fail. Failing a Use Rope check means falling (maybe to your death) or having an enemy escape (also maybe to your death). Yet they come up rarely enough that it's hard to justify buying ranks.

My house rules for Use Rope work as follows. Don't. Yes, you secured the grappling hook, and it holds your weight. Yes, you tie up your enemy, and the bonds are secure.

The reason I do this is because making these checks isn't any fun outside combat, and it always ends up with the PCs overthinking the problem and taking more time than they need to make sure they succeed. I still require Use Rope checks for trying to do this stuff in combat, and PCs still get to use Escape Artist if their enemies have bound them.

—Logan Bonner, editor

Etherealness

Certain creatures can or do exist on the Ethereal Plane. While on the Ethereal Plane, a creature is called ethereal. Unlike incorporeal creatures, ethereal creatures aren't present on the Material Plane.

TRAITS

Ethereal creatures are invisible, inaudible, insubstantial, and scentless to creatures on the Material Plane. Most magical attacks have no effect on them. An ethereal creature can see and hear into the Material Plane in a 60-foot radius, though material objects block sight and sound as they would for a creature on the Material Plane. An ethereal creature inside an object on the Material Plane can't see. Creatures and objects on the Material Plane look gray, indistinct, and ghostly to a creature on the Ethereal Plane. An ethereal creature can't affect the Material Plane, not even magically. An ethereal creature, however, interacts with other ethereal creatures and objects the way material creatures interact with material creatures and objects.

Ghosts

Ghosts have a power called manifestation that allows them to appear on the Material Plane as incorporeal creatures. Still, they're on the Ethereal Plane, and another ethereal creature can interact normally with a manifesting ghost.

SENSING

See invisibility and *true seeing* reveal ethereal creatures. Even if a creature on the Material Plane can see an ethereal creature, the ethereal creature is on another plane.

HARMING

A force effect originating on the Material Plane extends onto the Ethereal Plane, so that a *wall of force* blocks an ethereal creature, and a *magic missile* can strike one, provided the spellcaster can see the ethereal target. Gaze attacks and abjurations also extend from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane. None of these effects extend from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane.

ENVIRONMENT

Ethereal creatures move in any direction (including up or down) at will. They don't need to walk on the ground, and material objects don't block them. They pass through and operate in water as easily as air. Ethereal creatures can't fall or take falling damage.

Illus. by F. Vohwinkel

Falling

One of the most common hazards to adventurers is a fall from a great height. Another potential hazard is to have an object fall on them.

FALLING DAMAGE

A creature that falls takes 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of 20d6. If a creature deliberately jumps instead of merely falling, the first 1d6 is nonlethal damage. A DC 15 Jump check or DC 15 Tumble check allows a creature to avoid any damage from the first 10 feet fallen and converts any damage from the second 10 feet to nonlethal damage.

You can instead try to use Tumble to ignore falling damage. For every 15 points of your Tumble check result, you can treat a fall as if it were 10 feet shorter than it really is when determining damage.

Illus. by C. Frank

YIELDING SURFACES

Falls onto yielding surfaces also treat the first 1d6 of damage as nonlethal damage. This reduction is cumulative with reduced damage due to deliberate jumps and skill use.

WATER

Falls into water or similar liquids are handled differently. If the water is at least 10 feet deep, the first 20 feet of falling deal no damage. The next 20 feet deal nonlethal damage (1d3 per 10-foot increment). Beyond that, a fall into water deals 1d6 points of lethal damage per 10 feet.

Creatures that deliberately dive into water take no damage on a successful DC 15 Swim check or DC 15 Tumble check, as long as the water is at least 10 feet deep for every 30 feet fallen. However, the DC of the check increases by 5 for every 50 feet of the dive.

FALLING OBJECTS

Just as creatures take damage when they fall more than 10 feet, so too do they take damage when falling objects hit them. Falling objects deal damage based on their weight and the distance they have fallen.

For each 200 pounds of an object's weight, the object deals 1d6 points of damage, provided it falls at least 10 feet, adding an additional 1d6 points of damage for every 10-foot increment it falls beyond the first. Objects lighter than 200 pounds also deal damage when dropped, but they must fall farther to deal the same damage. Use the following table to see how far an object of a given weight must drop to deal 1d6 points of damage. This is also the increment at which the object deals an additional 1d6 points of damage. A falling object can deal a maximum of 20d6 points of damage. Objects weighing less than 1 pound don't deal damage to those they land upon, no matter how far they have fallen.

Damage from Falling Objects

Object Weight	Falling Distance
101–199 lb.	20 ft.
51–100 lb.	30 ft.
31–50 lb.	40 ft.
11–30 lb.	50 ft.
6–10 lb.	60 ft.
1–5 lb.	70 ft.

DANGEROUS FALLS

Falling in D&D has always been a simplified business. The maximum of 20d6 points of damage goes back to the earliest edition of the game. The 3e rules allow Tumble and Jump checks to negate some damage, and make the first 10 feet deal nonlethal damage for deliberate jumps, but the rule has essentially remained the same for 30 or more years. Players have a tendency to metagame this limitation, deliberately having their characters hurl themselves from great heights to save time, confident that they'll survive the fall.

My husband, Chris, developed a rather complex system for falling, in which the d6 rolls don't represent absolute damage but a proportion of total hit points. A result of 6 requires a reroll for the possibility of a broken bone. Modifiers apply for special circumstances, such as landing on a soft or sloping surface (reducing damage), landing on a jagged surface (increasing damage), or falling into water. DM discretion might adjust these guidelines. This house rule requires more calculation but does put the fear of heights back into the game: A 15th-level fighter and a 1st-level commoner have the same chance to be hurt by a great fall.

—Jennifer Clarke Wilkes, editor

Fear

Spells, magic items, and monsters can cause fear. In most cases, a Will saving throw is required to resist the effect. Fear attacks can have various consequences, but all of them are mind-affecting fear effects.

STAGES OF FEAR

Fear has stages—shaken, frightened, panicked, and cowering.

Shaken

Shaken creatures take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

Frightened

Frightened creatures take penalties as if shaken, and they flee from the source of their fear as quickly as they can. They can choose the path of their flight. Frightened creatures can use special abilities, including spells, to flee; indeed, a frightened creature must use such means if they are the only way to escape. Other than these stipulations, once frightened creatures can't sense the source of their fear, they can act as they want. However, if the duration of their fear continues, creatures can be forced to flee once more if the source of their fear presents itself again. Frightened creatures that are unable to flee can fight.

Panicked

Panicked creatures take penalties as if shaken, and they flee from the source of their fear as quickly as they can. Their path is random. They flee from all other dangers that confront them rather than facing those dangers. Panicked creatures cower if they're prevented from fleeing.

Cowering

Cowering creatures are frozen in fear and can take no actions. A cowering creature takes a –2 penalty to AC and loses its Dexterity bonus (in all applications).

ESCALATING FEAR

Fear effects are cumulative. A shaken creature that is made shaken again becomes frightened instead, and a shaken creature that is made frightened becomes panicked instead. A frightened creature that is made shaken or frightened becomes panicked instead.

Multiple exposures to the same effect don't trigger this escalation of fear. Exposure to different effects does. When such multiple exposures occur, the worst stage of fear lasts until the duration of all the effects causing the fear expire.

FEAR ATTACKS

When they're not spells, fear attacks can be extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like, with specifics explained in the ability's description.

Fear Aura

The use of a fear aura, which is a supernatural ability, is a free action. A fear aura is an area effect.

Frightful Presence

Frightful presence is an extraordinary ability that makes a creature's presence unsettling to foes. It takes effect when the creature performs some sort of dramatic act. Opponents within range who witness the act might become shaken or worse.

This ability affects only those opponents that have fewer Hit Dice than the creature has. An opponent can resist the effect with a successful Will save (the DC usually equals 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + its Cha modifier). An opponent that succeeds on the save is immune to that same creature's frightful presence for 24 hours.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

FRIGHTENED WITHOUT FLEEING

Once a creature becomes frightened, it runs away, so its usefulness in an encounter becomes extraordinarily limited. In a campaign where fear is common, a variant frightened condition can be more appropriate.

With this variant, a creature that is frightened is not forced to flee from the source of its fear. Instead, this condition imposes a –4 penalty on its attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks. A frightened creature subjected to another fear effect (but not the same effect) becomes panicked instead.

—James Wyatt, designer

Feint

You can try to mislead an opponent in melee combat, making it so that foe can't dodge your next attack effectively.

INITIATING A FEINT

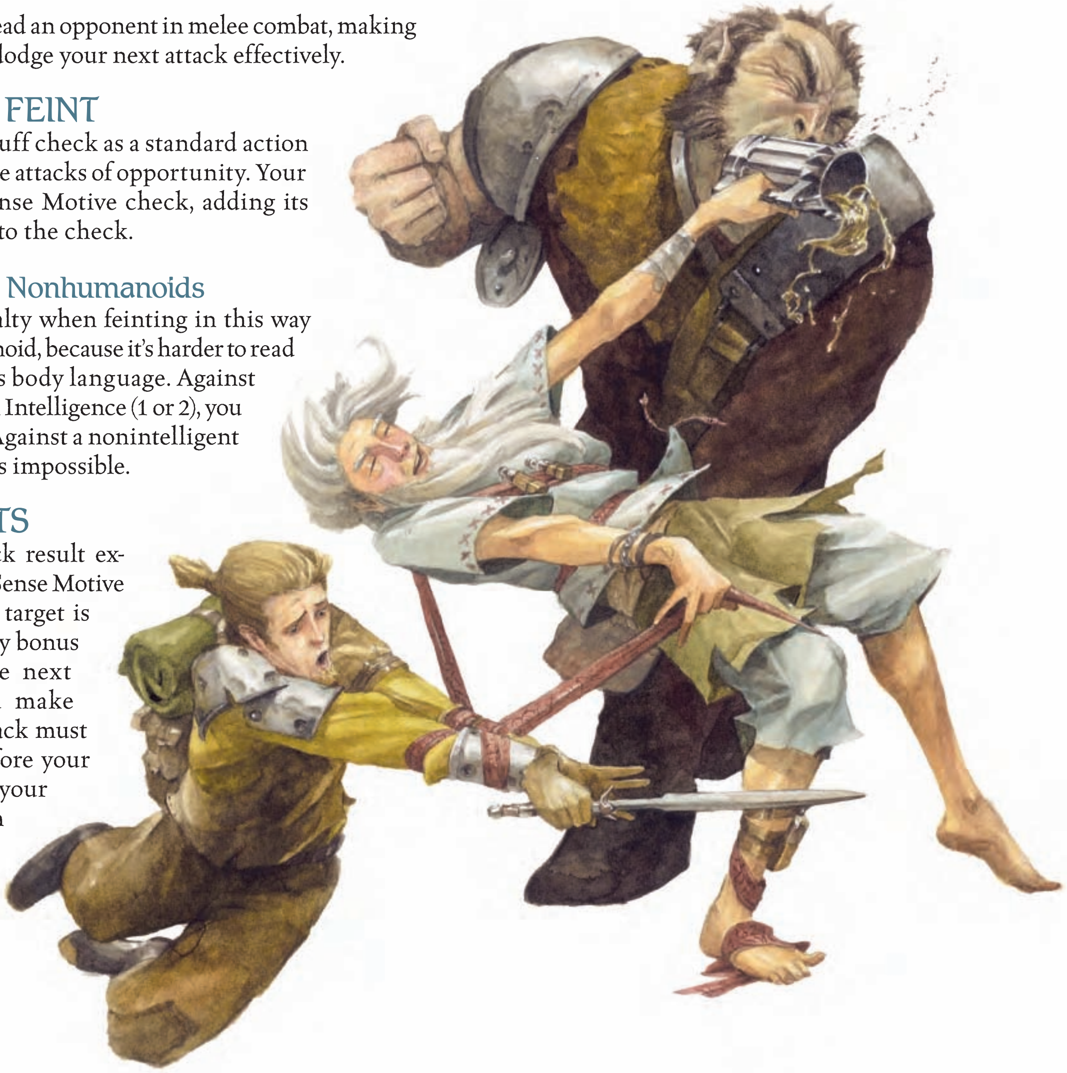
To feint, make a Bluff check as a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Your target makes a Sense Motive check, adding its base attack bonus to the check.

Feinting Against Nonhumanoids

You take a –4 penalty when feinting in this way against a nonhumanoid, because it's harder to read a strange creature's body language. Against a creature of animal Intelligence (1 or 2), you take a –8 penalty. Against a nonintelligent creature, feinting is impossible.

FEINT RESULTS

If your Bluff check result exceeds your target's Sense Motive check result, your target is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC against the next melee attack you make against it. This attack must be made on or before your next turn, or else your foe recovers from the feint and takes no further disadvantage from it.



Illus. by J. Jarvis

LOTUS FEINT

One of the characters I played was Lotus Blossom, a former geisha/spy who took up life as an adventurer (mostly rogue and swashbuckler levels). The adventuring party's tactics usually led to us being very spread out, and Lotus Blossom couldn't always count on a flank to enable her to take advantage of her sneak attack ability.

Always very self-sufficient, Lotus Blossom mastered the art of the feint. Investing lots of ranks in Bluff, as well as having Combat Expertise and Improved Feint, made her quite the combat force.

In one battle, she and another rogue were tag-teaming an enemy fighter. Wounded from many sneak attacks from the pair of us, he maneuvered onto favorable terrain, preventing us from giving each other a flank. The enemy cleric headed over to help her fighter ally and would've gotten there in another round. Confident of holding out against two mere rogues, now that they could no longer sneak attack, the fighter brandished his weapon.

Lotus Blossom chose her moment, successfully feinted, and followed up with a devastating attack.

Seeing her disemboweled fighter ally and two rogues turning toward her, the enemy cleric quickly surrendered.

—Gwendolyn F. M. Kestrel, designer

Fighting Defensively and Total Defense

When attacking, you can choose to devote more of your attention to defense rather than offense. Doing so is called fighting defensively. You can instead devote yourself entirely to defending yourself with total defense.

FIGHTING DEFENSIVELY

You can choose to fight defensively when attacking as a standard action or a full-round action. If you do so, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls until your next turn to gain a +2 dodge bonus to AC during the same time. This bonus stacks with the AC bonus granted by the Combat Expertise feat.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Tumble, you gain a +3 dodge bonus to AC when fighting defensively.

TOTAL DEFENSE

You can simply defend yourself as a standard action. You get a +4 dodge bonus to your AC for 1 round. Your AC improves at the start of this action, so it helps you against any attacks of opportunity you provoke during the round. You can't combine total defense with fighting defensively or with the benefit of the Combat Expertise feat, since using either of these tactics requires you to declare an attack or full attack. You can't make attacks of opportunity while using total defense.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Tumble, you gain a +6 dodge bonus to AC when using total defense.

Illus. by C. Frank

DUCK AND WEAVE

The fighting defensively and total defense actions don't get premium space in the core rulebooks, and most players are quick to forget them entirely. That's too bad, because they're great options for a character when (a) he's losing hit points at an uncomfortable rate and (b) he can't extricate himself from the unpleasant combat situation easily. These actions aren't as sexy as taking a full attack action or casting an empowered spell, but I can recall at least one rogue in my campaign thanking his lucky stars for total defense when his Armor Class soared from 21 to 27!

If your character can't hit worth a damn and routinely finds herself in the thick of things, consider writing the phrases "fight defensively" and "total defense" somewhere on page 1 of her character sheet. These words could save your character's life. Rogues and clerics are especially prone to landing in such predicaments—the rogue because of her propensity for sneak attacks and the cleric because of an occasional need to fill the fighter's really big shoes.

As an aside, I was a regular player in Monte Cook's campaign, and my urban ranger had neither the best attack bonus nor the best Armor Class in the party, by far. On more than one occasion, when Diethan was on the ropes, I would make him take the total defense action while inciting his enemies to attack him mercilessly. This act won nods of approval from my fellow players, who were either struck by my canny ploy to keep Diethan alive or appreciated my ability to couch Diethan's mounting desperation in the tender bosom of a half-remembered rule.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

Flanking

When making a melee attack, you get a +2 flanking bonus if your opponent is threatened by an ally on the opponent's opposite border or opposite corner. Only a creature that threatens your foe can help you gain a flanking bonus.

When in doubt about whether two allies flank an opponent, trace an imaginary line between the centers of the allies' spaces. If the line passes through opposite borders of the opponent's space, including corners of those borders, then the opponent is flanked.

BIG AND LITTLE CREATURES

If a flanker has a space larger than 1 square, it gets the flanking bonus if any square it occupies counts for flanking. Creatures that have a reach of 0 feet can't flank an opponent, because they don't threaten the squares around their own.

Illus. by J. Ryman

HOW WE LEARNED TO FLANK

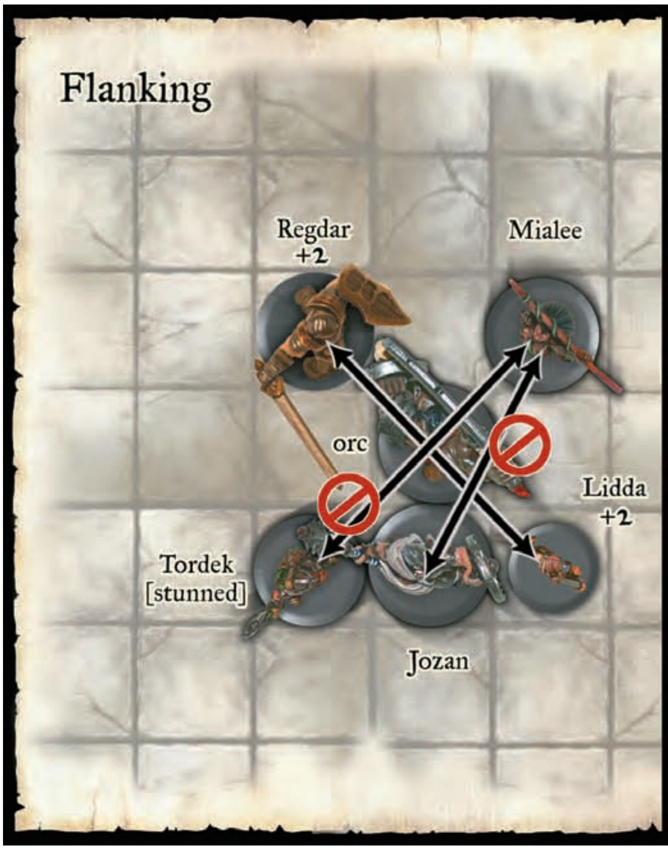
In the flagging days of D&D's 2nd Edition, while 3rd Edition was being feverishly designed and tested, I and others were relegated to a back conference room at Wizards, tapped to create a D&D-themed board game. The board game drew on the nascent 3e rules, and thus included wizards, rogues, fighters, clerics, guardian monsters, and treasures to be won. Because we were using unformed rules as the basis for our game, and because we wanted a simplified version of those rules, we felt free to do anything we wanted.

The game's main innovation was that it needed no Dungeon Master. To play our board game, no one would be required to take on the herculean task of mastering all the rules before considering actually playing. Randomly generated quests, tiles, and monsters could stand in for the normally vital roles of storyteller, judge, and facilitator wrapped into a single body. Because our game was to be a board game, we felt we might just be able to get away with our conceit that such a thing as DM-less gaming was possible. In any event, each player had a piece representing a character and tracked that piece on a grid, just as in D&D.

We had a lot of fun running through dozens of iterations and simplifications of fledgling 3e rules for our board game. When we got to the rogue, we wondered how to make it obvious, in a DM-less environment, when the rogue should be able to sneak attack. Someone on our team slowly moved the rogue's figure so a foe stood directly between the rogue and one of the rogue's allies, and said, "How about whenever that happens?"

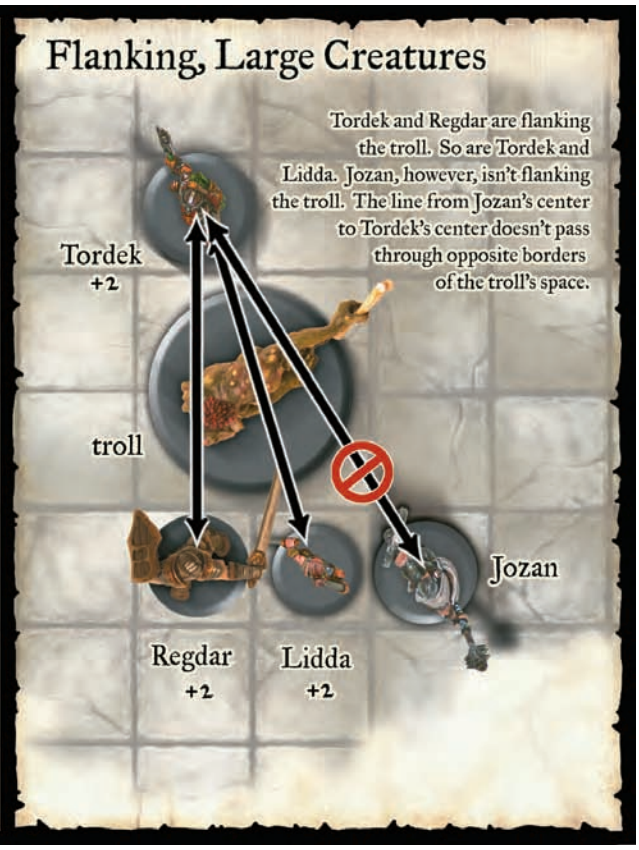
Thus the concept of flanking was born.

—Bruce R. Cordell, designer



Flanking

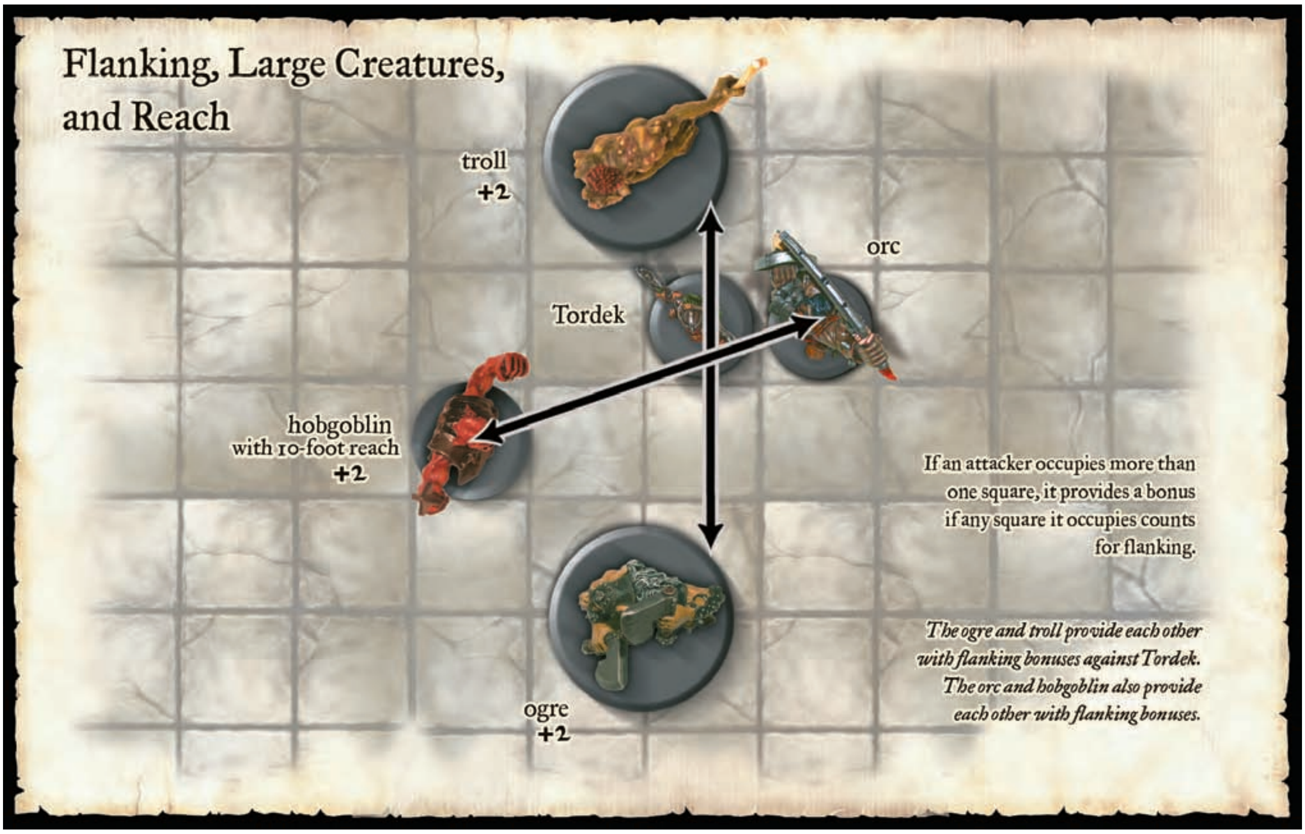
Regdar
+2
Mialee
orc
Lidda
+2
Tordek
[stunned]
Jozan



Flanking, Large Creatures

Tordek and Regdar are flanking the troll. So are Tordek and Lidda. Jozan, however, isn't flanking the troll. The line from Jozan's center to Tordek's center doesn't pass through opposite borders of the troll's space.

Tordek
+2
troll
Jozan
Regdar
+2
Lidda
+2



Flanking, Large Creatures, and Reach

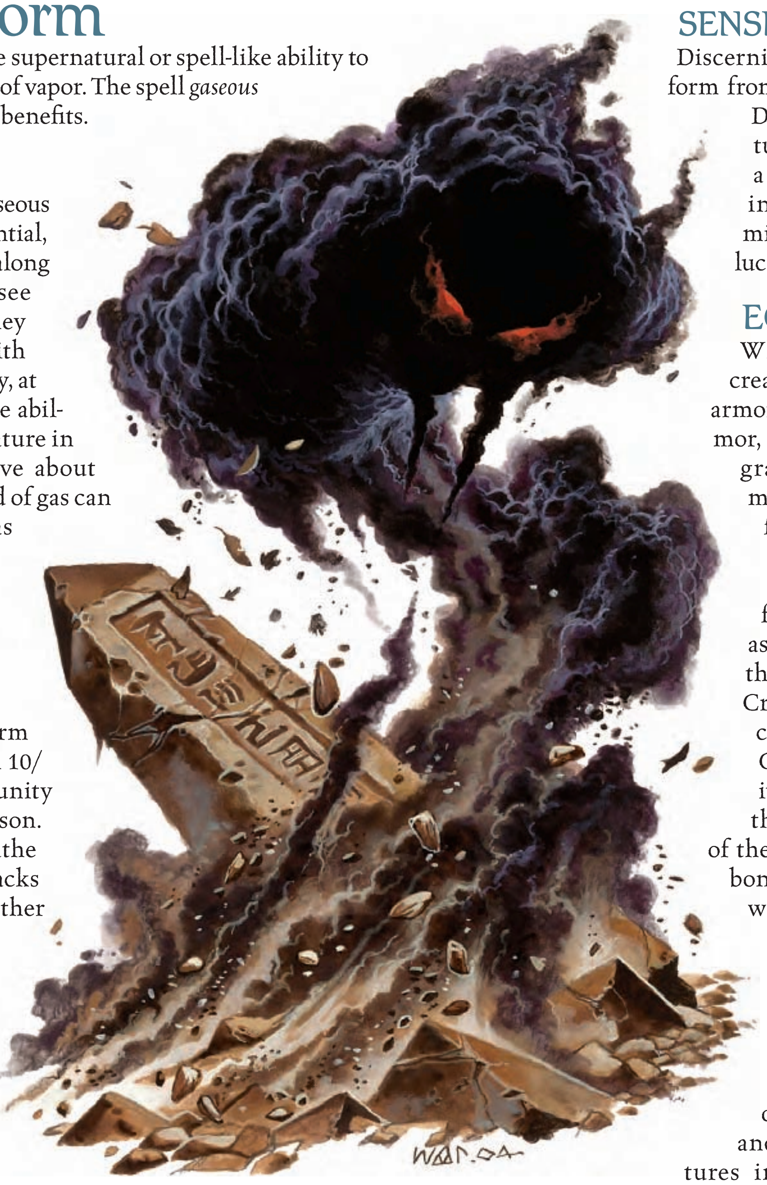
If an attacker occupies more than one square, it provides a bonus if any square it occupies counts for flanking.

The ogre and troll provide each other with flanking bonuses against Tordek. The orc and hobgoblin also provide each other with flanking bonuses.

troll
+2
orc
Tordek
hobgoblin
with 10-foot reach
+2
ogre
+2

Gaseous Form

Some creatures have the supernatural or spell-like ability to take the form of a cloud of vapor. The spell *gaseous form* provides the same benefits.



Illus. by W. Reynolds

TRAITS

Creatures that take on gaseous form becomes insubstantial, misty, and translucent along with all their gear (see Equipment, below). They can't run but can fly, with perfect maneuverability, at a speed indicated in the ability's description. A creature in gaseous form can move about and do anything a cloud of gas can conceivably do, such as flow through a crack under a door. It can't, however, pass through solid matter.

HARMING

Creatures in gaseous form have damage reduction 10/magic, as well as immunity to critical hits and poison. They don't need to breathe and are immune to attacks involving breathing. Other spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities affect them normally.

ATTACKS

While in gaseous form, creatures can't attack physically or cast spells that have verbal, somatic, material, or focus components. They lose their supernatural abilities, except for the supernatural ability to leave and reassume gaseous form. If a creature is holding a charge on a touch spell and takes gaseous form, the touch spell discharges harmlessly.

SENSING

Discerning a creature in gaseous form from natural mist requires a DC 15 Spot check. Creatures in gaseous form gain a +20 bonus on Hide checks in an area that contains mist, smoke, or other translucent gas.

EQUIPMENT

While in gaseous form, creatures lose the benefit of armor, shields, and natural armor, including such bonuses granted or enhanced by magic items. Size modifier, Dexterity modifier, deflection bonus, dodge bonuses, and AC bonuses from force effects (such as from *bracers of armor* or the *shield* spell) still apply. Creatures in gaseous form can't activate magic items. Continuously functioning items remain active unless those items provide one of the aforementioned useless bonuses to AC or are otherwise rendered moot by the gaseous form (such as a magic weapon).

ENVIRONMENT

Creatures in gaseous form can't enter water or other liquid. Winds and moving air affect creatures in gaseous form to the extent that the wind pushes such creatures in the direction the wind is moving. However, even the strongest wind can't disperse or damage a creature in gaseous form.

VAMPIRE SHTICK

A vampire can take gaseous form as a standard action. While in this version of gaseous form, the vampire can take damage. Gaseous form prevents a creature from using supernatural abilities, so the vampire loses traits such as DR 10/magic and silver. But gaseous form provides all its normal benefits, and fast healing is an extraordinary ability.

If a vampire is reduced to 0 hit points, it automatically takes gaseous form. While in this version of gaseous form, it can't take damage—it's undead and has no hit points remaining. A vampire can even enter this version of gaseous form while already in the other, assuming it's dropped to 0 hit points. On the upside, a vampire forced into gaseous form in this way then has to go to its coffin and lie there, waiting an hour for you to stake it.

Why so complicated? Both aspects of the vampire's ability were designed to mimic elements of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*—the ability to float about as "motes of dust" and the need to rest in a coffin.

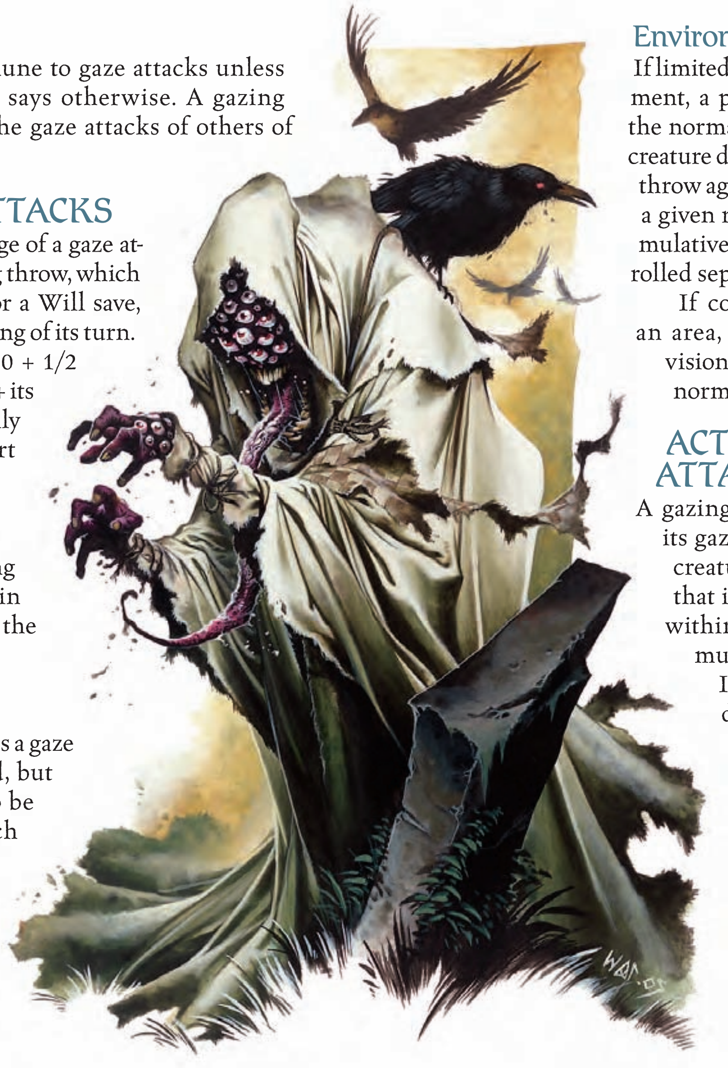
—Matthew Sernett, designer

Gaze Attacks

Gaze attacks can charm, damage, petrify, or even kill. Those gaze attacks not produced by a spell or spell-like ability are supernatural.

Unless specified otherwise, a creature that has a gaze attack (a gazing creature) can suppress the attack at will without using an action to do so. The gazing creature can also veil its eyes, negating its gaze attack.

Gaze attacks can affect ethereal opponents. Invisible creatures can't use gaze attacks.



Illus. by W. Reynolds

IMMUNITY

Blind creatures are immune to gaze attacks unless the attack's description says otherwise. A gazing creature is immune to the gaze attacks of others of its kind.

PASSIVE GAZE ATTACKS

Each creature within range of a gaze attack must attempt a saving throw, which can be a Fortitude save or a Will save, each round at the beginning of its turn. The DC usually equals 10 + 1/2 the gazing creature's HD + its Cha modifier. A potentially affected creature can avert or cover its eyes to gain a better chance to be unaffected by the gaze attack.

Just looking at a gazing creature's image, such as in a mirror, doesn't subject the viewer to a gaze attack.

Averting Eyes

Allies of a creature that has a gaze attack might be affected, but they're all considered to be averting their eyes. Each round, a creature that is averting its eyes has a 50% chance of not needing to make a saving throw.

An opponent can avert its eyes from the gazing creature's face while at the same time looking at the creature's body, watching its shadow, or tracking the creature in a reflective surface. The gazing creature gains concealment relative to such an opponent.

Covering Eyes

An opponent can shut its eyes, turn its back on the gazing creature, or wear a blindfold. In these cases, the opponent doesn't need to make a saving throw. The gazing creature gains total concealment relative to such an opponent.

Environmental Factors

If limited visibility results in concealment, a percentage chance equal to the normal miss chance exists that a creature doesn't need to make a saving throw against the gaze attack during a given round. This chance isn't cumulative with averting the eyes. It's rolled separately.

If complete darkness pervades an area, creatures that have darkvision are affected by gaze attacks normally.

ACTIVE GAZE ATTACKS

A gazing creature can actively use its gaze as a standard action. The creature simply chooses a target that it has line of sight to and is within range, and that opponent must attempt a saving throw. If the target has chosen to defend against the gaze as discussed earlier, the opponent has a chance to avoid needing to attempt the saving throw. If a gazing creature uses its gaze in this way, it's possible for a foe to need to save twice during the same round—once before its turn and once at the beginning of its turn.

LOOK INTO MY EYES!

A monster that has a gaze attack can be tricky to play properly because the gaze attack needs to be resolved not only on the monster's turn but also at the start of every character's turn. In recent years, I've grown lazy and adopted a house rule stating that gaze attacks are swift actions that happen only on the monster's turn. In other words, a monster can make its gaze attack as a swift action against a single foe on its turn, and characters don't need to worry about accidentally meeting the creature's gaze on their turns. Hey, it speeds up play and gets me off the hook.

Frankly, the game could use a few more monsters with gaze attacks that do something other than petrify. A good example is the nothic (introduced in *Miniatures Handbook*), which has a gaze attack that deals damage—very easy to resolve. I once designed a monster with a gaze attack that compelled the target to make a melee attack against itself as an immediate action. What's funnier than a character smacking himself in the forehead with a greatclub? Sadly, my players killed the beast before it managed to affect anyone with its gaze.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

Grappling

Grappling means wrestling hand-to-hand. It's tricky to perform, but sometimes you want to pin foes instead of killing them, and sometimes you have no choice in the matter. For monsters, grappling can mean trapping you in a toothy maw or holding you down to claw you to pieces.

GRAPPLE CHECKS

Repeatedly in a grapple, you need to make opposed grapple checks against an opponent. A grapple check is like a melee attack roll, but it's modified by your grapple modifier.

Grapple modifier = base attack bonus + Str modifier + special size modifier + other modifiers

Special Size Modifier

The special size modifier for a grapple check is as follows: Colossal +16, Gargantuan +12, Huge +8, Large +4, Medium +0, Small –4, Tiny –8, Diminutive –12, Fine –16. Use this number in place of the normal size modifier you use when making an attack roll.

Other Modifiers

Feats, such as Improved Grapple, and other abilities can provide grapple check modifiers.

INITIATING A GRAPPLE

Starting a grapple is an attack. Each time you attempt to start a grapple, you provoke an attack of opportunity from the target you're trying to grapple. If the attack of opportunity deals damage, the grapple attempt fails. If the attack of opportunity misses or fails to deal damage, you can make a melee touch attack to grab the target. If you fail to hit the target, the grapple attempt fails.

If you can make multiple attacks due to a high base attack bonus, you can attempt to start a grapple multiple times by making a full attack. If you succeed in starting the grapple and have remaining attacks, you can use those attacks to perform other maneuvers allowed in a grapple (see Grappling Results).

RESOLVING A GRAPPLE

If you hit, make an opposed grapple check as a free action. If you succeed, you and your target are now grappling, and you deal damage to the target as if with an unarmed strike. If you lose, you fail to start the grapple. You automatically lose an attempt to hold if the target is two or more size categories larger than you are. In case of a tie, the combatant with the higher grapple check modifier wins. If those numbers are identical, roll again to break the tie.

Maintaining a Grapple

To maintain a grapple in later rounds, you must move into the target's space. This movement is free and doesn't count as part of your movement in the round. Moving in this way provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening opponents, but not from your target. If you can't move into your target's space, you can't maintain the grapple and must immediately let go of the target. To grapple again, you must initiate another grapple.

GRAPPLING RESULTS

While you're grappling, you don't threaten any squares. You're denied your Dexterity bonus to AC against opponents you aren't grappling. You can still use it against opponents you're grappling.

Regardless of who started the grapple, while you're grappling, you can perform only the following maneuvers. Some maneuvers (as indicated in the following text) can be performed in place of an attack. If you can make multiple attacks because of a high base attack bonus, you can perform as many of one of these maneuvers as you have attacks. You can choose the same or a different maneuver for each attack.

A creature that has a high enough base attack bonus can use a full-round action to make a grapple check for every extra attack its base attack bonus would allow it if it were a character. That means such a creature can make two grapple checks if its base attack bonus is +6 to +10, three if +11 to +15, and four if +16 or higher.

Activate a Magic Item: You can activate a magic item that isn't a spell completion item. You don't need to make a grapple check to activate the item, but it takes the normal time to activate.

Attack Your Opponent: You can make an attack with an unarmed strike, a natural weapon, or a light weapon against a creature you're grappling. You take a –4 penalty on the attack roll. You can't attack with two weapons while grappling, even if both are light weapons.

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A creature can attack with only one of its natural weapons on its turn while grappling, unless it has a special ability that allows it to do otherwise or its description provides an exception. This attack is usually made with the creature's primary natural weapon.

Cast a Spell: You can attempt to cast a spell while grappling or pinned, provided its casting time is no more than 1 standard action, it has no somatic component, and you have in hand any material components or focuses you might need. Any spell that requires precise and careful action is impossible to cast while grappling or pinned. If the spell is one that you can cast while grappling, you must succeed on a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level) or lose the spell. You don't have to make a grapple check to cast the spell, but it takes its normal casting time to cast.

Damage Your Opponent: While grappling, you can deal damage to your opponent equivalent to that dealt by your unarmed strike. Make an opposed grapple check in place of an attack. If you win, you deal nonlethal damage as normal for your unarmed strike. If you want to deal lethal damage, you take a –4 penalty on your grapple check.

Draw a Light Weapon: By making a successful grapple check, you can draw a light weapon as a move action.

Escape from Grapple: You can escape a grapple by winning an opposed grapple check you make in place of making an attack. You can make an Escape Artist check in place of your grapple check if you so desire, but doing this requires a standard action. If more than one opponent is grappling you, your grapple check result has to beat all their individual grapple check results. Opponents don't have to try to hold you if they don't want to. If you escape, you finish by moving into any unoccupied space adjacent to that in which you were grappling.

Move: You can move half your speed, bringing all others engaged in the grapple with you, by winning an opposed grapple check. Doing this requires a standard action, and you must beat all the other grapplers' individual grapple check results to move the grapple. You get a +4 bonus on your grapple check to move a pinned opponent, but only if no one else is involved in the grapple.

Retrieve a Spell Component: You can produce a spell component from your pouch while grappling by using a full-round action. Doing so doesn't require a successful grapple check.

Pin Your Opponent: You can hold your opponent stationary for 1 round by winning an opposed grapple check you make in place of an attack. Once you have an opponent pinned, you have a few options available to you (see If You're Pinning, below).

Break Another's Pin: If you're grappling an opponent that has another creature pinned, you can make an opposed grapple check in place of an attack. If you win, you break the pin for the other creature. That creature is still grappling, but it is no longer pinned.

Use Opponent's Weapon: If your opponent is holding a light weapon, you can attempt to use that weapon by making an opposed grapple check in place of an attack. If you win, you don't gain possession of the weapon, but you can attack your opponent with it, taking a –4 penalty on the attack roll. Attacking in this way doesn't require an additional action.

If You're Pinning

A pinned opponent is at your mercy. However, while pinning, you don't have quite the freedom that you did while grappling. You can attempt to damage your opponent with an opposed grapple check, you can attempt to use your opponent's weapon, or you can attempt to move the grapple (all described above). At your option, you can prevent a pinned opponent from speaking.

You can remove or grab away a secured object worn by a pinned opponent by making a disarm attempt (see page 45). The opponent gets a +4 bonus on its roll to resist your attempt.

You can release a pinned opponent as a free action. If you do so, you're no longer considered to be grappling that foe (and vice versa). You finish by moving into any unoccupied space adjacent to that in which you were grappling.

You can't draw or use a weapon (against the pinned creature or any other creature), escape another's grapple, retrieve a spell component, pin another creature, or break another's pin while you're pinning an opponent.

If You're Pinned

When an opponent has pinned you, you are held stationary (but not helpless) for 1 round. You can't take any actions the creature pinning you doesn't allow, even speaking. While you're pinned, you take a –4 penalty to your AC against opponents other than the one pinning you. You can't move, so your Dexterity is considered to be 0 for the purpose of determining AC (–5 modifier). You're also subject to attacks, such as sneak attacks, that rely on a defender's being denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.

To escape, you can make an Escape Artist check in place of a grapple check, but doing this requires a standard action. If you win, you escape the pin, but you're still grappling.

ATTACKING GRAPPLERS

Those not engaged in a grapple can attack those engaged in a grapple. Grapplers take the aforementioned penalties to AC. If you make a ranged attack against a grappler while not engaged in the grapple, you roll randomly to see which grappler your attack strikes.

JOINING A GRAPPLE

If your target is already grappling someone else, you can use an attack to start a grapple, except that the target doesn't get an attack of opportunity against you, and your grab automatically succeeds. You still have to succeed on an opposed grapple check to become part of the grapple.

If multiple opponents are involved in the grapple, you pick one to make the opposed grapple check against.

Multiple Grapplers

Several combatants can be in a single grapple. Up to four combatants can grapple a single opponent during a given round. Creatures that are one or more size categories smaller than you count for half, creatures that are one size category larger than you count double, and creatures two or more size categories larger than you count quadruple.

When you're grappling with multiple opponents, you choose one opponent to make an opposed check against, except when you're trying to perform an act that requires you to beat all the other grapplers.

Helpless Defenders

A helpless defender is paralyzed, *held*, bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise completely at your mercy.

ATTACKING

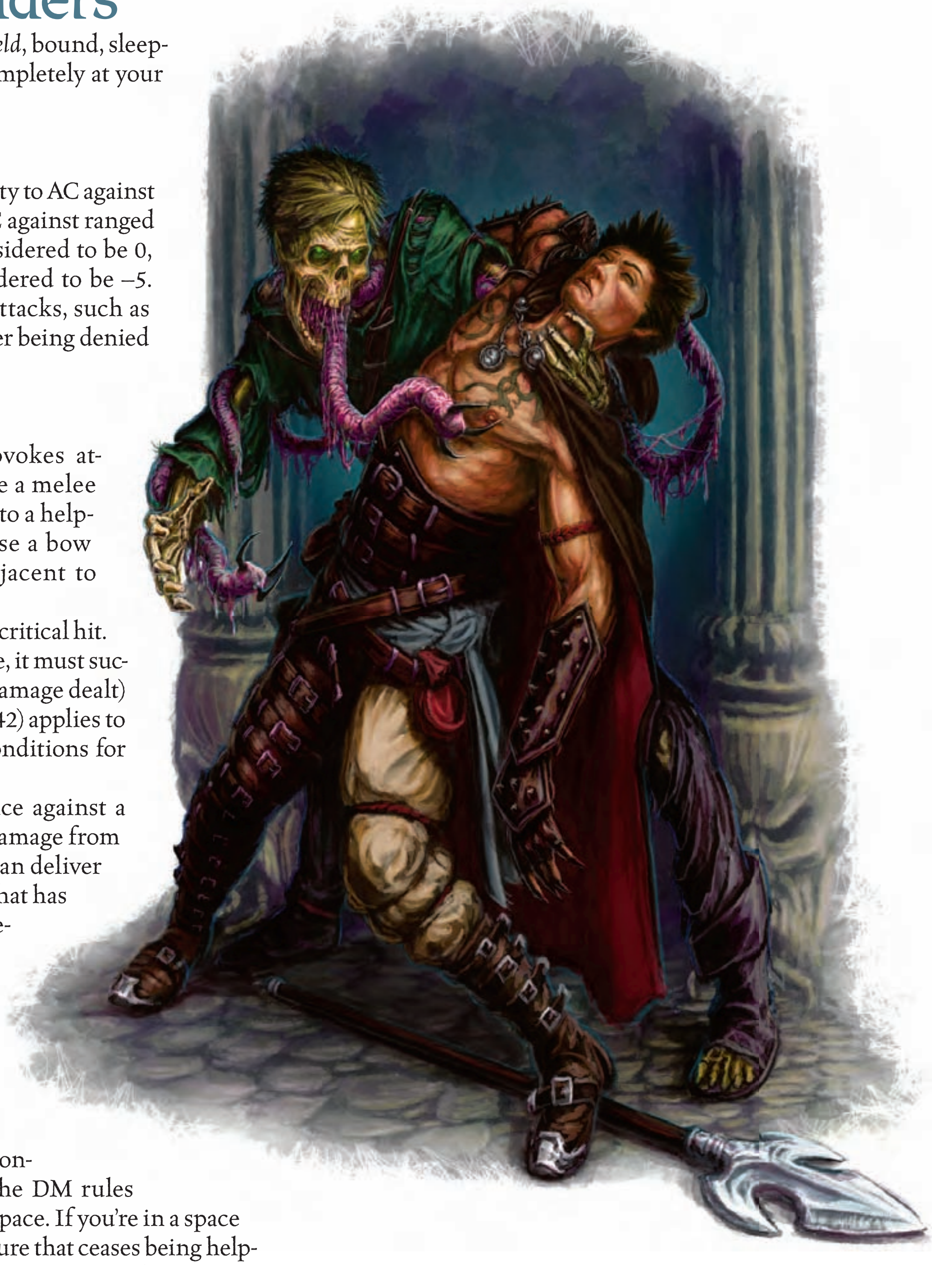
A helpless defender takes a –4 penalty to AC against melee attacks, but no penalty to AC against ranged attacks. Its Dexterity score is considered to be 0, so its Dexterity modifier is considered to be –5. A helpless defender is subject to attacks, such as sneak attacks, that rely on a defender being denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.

Coup de Grace

As a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity, you can use a melee weapon to deliver a coup de grace to a helpless defender. You can instead use a bow or crossbow, provided you're adjacent to the target.

You automatically hit and score a critical hit. If the defender survives the damage, it must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or die. Precision damage (see page 42) applies to a coup de grace when all other conditions for that damage are also met.

You can't deliver a coup de grace against a creature that is immune to extra damage from critical hits, such as a golem. You can deliver a coup de grace against a creature that has total concealment, but doing this requires two consecutive full-round actions—one to find the creature once you've determined what square it's in, and one to deliver the coup de grace.



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SHARING SPACES

You can freely enter a square that contains a helpless creature, unless the DM rules otherwise, sharing that creature's space. If you're in a space with a helpless Small or larger creature that ceases being helpless, and for whatever reason that creature can't share spaces with you, the creature must be or remain prone, attempt to grapple you, or leave your space at its first opportunity. It provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for what it does.

PRONOUNCING DEATH

The glossary of the 3.0 *Player's Handbook* featured the pronunciation of coup de grace as "koo-day-grah." It wasn't long before French-speaking D&D fans the world over corrected us on our Americanized (okay, they said mistaken) pronunciation of their famous and flavorful attack. This faux pas led us to drop the pronunciation guide in the 3.5 *Player's Handbook*. While doing that reduced the amount of correspondence on the subject, it has led to a crazy diversity of pronunciations, even at the same table.

So we asked our resident Wizards French speakers to pronounce the term for us, and then checked and compared numerous pronunciation guides. We've determined that "koo-de-grahs" is the closest to the true pronunciation of the term our American lips and tongues can manage.

Given that French, like any language, has numerous dialects and accents, we're sure someone out there will disagree, so we look forward to a new round of posts and letters on the subject.

—Stephen Radney-MacFarland, developer

Rules and Fun

by James Wyatt, designer

Why does D&D have rules? Why does this book exist?

Wouldn't it be fun to gather a group of your friends together and engage in a collaborative form of storytelling together, crafting an epic tale of high fantasy? You could tell any story you could imagine, invent the strangest and most fantastic magic, shake the earth and tear the heavens. You could do anything you could dream, within your story, and leave that gathering inspired. Story has power. Our myths shape the way we live.

It's possible that what I've just described is not too different from one of your D&D sessions. I've heard people brag that they hardly ever roll dice when they play D&D. When some people think about D&D as a roleplaying game, that first word is the most important—roleplaying. It's almost a form of improvisational theater, immersing themselves in characters, trying to imagine what those characters would do in the fantastic situations of the D&D world. Improvisational theater or collaborative storytelling.

One of the great elements of roleplaying, in this sense, is that you're not having a story fed to you. You are participating in the creation of the story. That's one of the things that makes it fun—your involvement in it, your ability to explore a vast expanse of possibility that's limited only by your imagination (and that of your DM). Game theorist and designer Will Wright has said, "Fun is the process of discovering areas in a possibility space." In D&D, that kind of fun never ends.

But the second half of "roleplaying game" is game. Some people focus on that word almost to the exclusion of the first. They view D&D purely as a tactical simulation—an exercise in die-rolling and probability. But fundamentally, D&D is a game about roleplaying, rather than a roleplaying exercise like you might encounter in a corporate training exercise or a session with a psychologist.

Games have rules.

Why have rules? For people who don't like dice with their D&D, the rules might seem to get in the way of fun. For the tactical simulation crowd, who can't be bothered to roleplay, the fun is entirely in the rules. But in a roleplaying game, the rules contribute to fun in two important ways.

The first is that rules define limits. Part of the fun of a game is puzzle-solving. The biggest puzzle of D&D is figuring out how to succeed within the limits of the rules.

In a pure storytelling exercise, someone can present a challenge for the protagonists, but there might not be a lot of challenge to figure out how to overcome it, because no limits exist as to what you can do. The protagonists of an improvisational story can be godlike, easily overcoming any obstacle. Children's playground games are a fine example of this. When my son and I act out imaginary battles, I can't win, because he constantly invents defenses against my attacks and creates new attacks to assault me. His imagination is faster than mine, so he wins.

Rules limit that escalation and enforce balance. They carefully define your chance of succeeding on many of the things your character might attempt in the course of an adventure. Fundamentally, game balance is about making sure that everyone has the same limits, or rather, limits that give them roughly equal chances of success in different ways. A fighter and a wizard fight very differently, and they're skilled at different roles, but if they're balanced with each other, they have equal opportunities to defeat their foes and emerge from the dungeon victorious. And that makes the game more fun.

When my son and I play D&D, he has to figure out how to beat my monsters given the spells and abilities at his character's disposal. He's inclined to invent spells that will let him defeat any monster I throw at him, but the rules let me say, "Well, that should be a higher-level spell than you can cast. Maybe in a couple more levels." D&D combat is a lot more fun, for me at least, than being conquered by a fevered imagination.

The second way rules contribute to fun is by setting out possibilities. D&D's rules as limits largely fit between the covers of this book. That's actually pretty amazing—people think of D&D as an incredibly complex game with entire bookshelves full of rules. The vast majority of those rules, though, are not limits—they're possibilities. Most D&D books are full of classes you can adopt, spells you can cast, monsters you can fight. Even when you're not actively playing the game, you can look through your books and sample the possibilities. You can plan your character's advancement—choose the feats you want to take over the next several levels, pick your next spells, browse the prestige classes. You can stock dungeons with monsters, traps, and treasures. You can build a whole world from the possibilities expressed in the rules. You can even make up your own rules—your own prestige class, spell, feat, race, or monster.

Rules are a two-edged sword where possibilities are concerned, though. In a computer game, the rules (that is to say, the computer code) define the possibilities of what you can do very narrowly. If you want to crawl underneath a bed and the game doesn't let you crawl, you just can't. The rules are too restrictive. The rules of D&D, though, limit your options without too narrowly defining them. The beauty of D&D is that your character can try anything you can imagine. The rules are there as a yardstick to measure your chance of success.

What's most fun about D&D, though—at least in my opinion—is that the game is what you want it to be. If you're more interested in the roleplaying than in the game, or the other way around, the game can accommodate your preference. Whatever your taste in fantasy, you can create it within the framework of the rules. If you want to immerse yourself in the game, build your own world from the hamlet level up (or from the cosmological level down), the game will reward you for all that work. If you want to show up one evening a week and hang out with your friends, rolling a few dice when someone pokes you, the game will reward that level of involvement as well. The fun is there for the finding—in this one book of rules limits and in the ever-expanding universe of rules possibilities.

Incorporeality

An incorporeal creature is insubstantial, unlike a corporeal creatures, which is solid and tangible. Some creatures are incorporeal by nature, while others can acquire the incorporeal subtype from time to time.

TRAITS

An incorporeal creature has no physical body. It doesn't need to eat, drink, or breathe, and indeed can't do these things since it can't affect physical objects, even air. Such a creature has no natural armor bonus, but it has a deflection bonus to AC equal to its Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is higher. It has no Strength score, so its Dexterity modifier applies to its melee attacks and its ranged attacks.

An incorporeal creature has no weight. Further, it can't set off traps that are triggered by weight. It can't fall or take falling damage. Most incorporeal creatures can fly.

SENSING

In almost all cases, nonvisual senses are ineffective for detecting or pinpointing incorporeal creatures. Blindsense, blindsight, scent, and tremorsense are all useless. An incorporeal creature moves silently and can't be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be. If an incorporeal creature chooses to make noise, it can be detected by means of normal hearing, or by blindsense or blindsight based on acute hearing. If a creature possesses some other nonvisual sense, use your best judgment in determining the effectiveness of that sense in detecting an incorporeal creature.

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HARMING

An incorporeal creature can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons or creatures that strike as magic weapons, and spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities. It's immune to all nonmagical attack forms.

Even when hit by spells (including touch spells) or magic weapons, an incorporeal creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source—except for positive energy, negative energy, force effects such as *magic missile*, or attacks made with ghost touch weapons. Although it isn't strictly a magical attack, holy water can damage incorporeal undead, but a hit with holy water has a 50% chance of not affecting such a creature.

For attacks that require attack rolls, the chance to ignore damage is treated as a 50% miss chance. If a creature receives miss chances from multiple sources, such as from being incorporeal and having concealment, they don't stack. Only the highest miss chance applies.

Nondamaging effects affect incorporeal creatures normally unless such effects require corporeal targets to function (such as *implosion*) or they create a corporeal effect that incorporeal creatures are normally unaffected by (such as *web* or *wall of stone*).

ATTACKS

An incorporeal creature's attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields, although deflection bonuses and force effects (such as *mage armor*) work normally against such attacks. An incorporeal touch attack isn't the same as a melee touch attack—armor can work against an incorporeal touch attack if the armor has the ghost touch property.

Nonmagical attacks made by an incorporeal creature with a melee weapon have no effect on corporeal targets, and any melee attack an incorporeal creature makes with a magic weapon against a corporeal target has a 50% miss chance, except for attacks it makes with a ghost touch weapon, which are made normally (no miss chance). If an incorporeal creature throws a thrown weapon or a shoots a ranged weapon, the projectile becomes corporeal as soon as it's thrown or fired, and thus can affect a corporeal target normally (no miss chance).

An incorporeal creature can't trip or grapple, nor can it be tripped or grappled. In fact, it can't perform any physical act that moves or manipulates a corporeal opponent or that foe's equipment, nor is it subject to such acts. An incorporeal creature that attempts to grapple or move another incorporeal creature or object uses its Charisma modifier for rolls on which a Strength modifier normally applies.

EQUIPMENT

Incorporeal creatures can't manipulate or carry corporeal objects. A creature must be able to swallow a potion or smear on an oil. Because of this, incorporeal creatures can't use potions or oils.

Equipment worn or carried by an incorporeal creature is also incorporeal as long as that equipment remains in the creature's possession. An object the creature relinquishes loses its incorporeal quality, and the creature loses the ability to manipulate that object. Magic items possessed by an incorporeal creature work normally with respect to their effects on the creature or on another target. Similarly, spells cast by an incorporeal creature affect corporeal creatures normally.

OTHER CREATURES

An incorporeal creature can occupy the same space as a corporeal creature, unless the corporeal creature is entirely surrounded by a force effect. An incorporeal creature entering a corporeal creature's space (or vice versa) provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for moving into another creature's space. The entering creature must then succeed on a touch attack against the target to share the same physical space. If the target is helpless or doesn't resist, no attack is necessary. If the attack succeeds, the entering creature moves into the target's space. This attack deals no damage, even if the entering creature's touch attack normally deals damage. If the attack fails, the entering creature returns to the space it occupied before entering the target's space.

An incorporeal creature occupying the space of a corporeal creature might gain cover, while the corporeal creature might gain concealment. See the Sharing Spaces table. For example, a shadow sharing the space of an ogre gains cover, but the ogre gains no benefit. A shadow sharing the space of a halfling grants the halfling concealment, but gains no benefit itself. A shadow sharing the space of a human gains cover, and the human gains concealment. This cover or concealment affects even attacks made by the other creature sharing the space.

Either creature can end the "sharing" of a space simply by leaving that space. Doing so leaves the other creature in the space. If the leaving creature moves more than 5 feet, this movement provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for leaving a threatened square.

Sharing Spaces

Incorporeal Creature Is . . .	Incorporeal Creature Gains . . .	Corporeal Creature Gains . . .
Two or more size categories larger	—	Total concealment[1]
One size category larger	—	Concealment
Same size	Cover	Concealment
One size category smaller	Cover	—
Two or more size categories smaller[3]	Total cover[2]	—

[1] If the corporeal creature makes a melee attack against a creature outside the space of the incorporeal creature, this benefit is reduced to concealment.

[2] If the incorporeal creature makes a melee attack against a creature outside the space of the corporeal creature, this benefit is reduced to cover.

[3] The incorporeal creature can ignore any armor bonus the corporeal creature might have from force effects.

ENVIRONMENT

An incorporeal creature can't pass through a force effect. It can pass through and operate in water as easily as it does in air. Such a creature can enter or pass through solid objects, but it must remain adjacent to the object's exterior, which means it can't pass directly through an object whose space is larger than its own. It has an innate sense of direction, allowing it to move at full speed even when it can't see.

Although an incorporeal creature inside an object can sense the presence of creatures or objects in a square adjacent to its current location, such objects or creatures have total concealment against the incorporeal creature's attacks while it remains inside the object. An incorporeal creature hiding inside a solid object receives a +2 circumstance bonus on Listen checks, because solid objects carry sound well. Pinpointing an opponent from inside a solid object uses the same rules as pinpointing invisible opponents. To sense farther from the object it is inside and attack normally, the incorporeal creature must emerge. An incorporeal creature inside an object has total cover, but when it attacks a creature outside the object, it has only cover.

An incorporeal creature can also occupy the same space as a solid object without being inside that object, and it typically gains cover from doing so. Compare the size of the incorporeal creature to the size of the corporeal object. Consult the Sharing Spaces table to determine the extent of cover enjoyed by the incorporeal creature.

A QUESTION OF INCORPOREALITY

With all the moving parts of D&D, it's no surprise that occasionally some tidbit is solved in seemingly random fashion. While working on *Complete Arcane,* I discovered the *ghostform* spell, which allowed the caster to assume an incorporeal form. Picked up from *Tome and Blood,* the spell had previously been ridiculously overpowered, and development had already reduced the duration and increased the spell's level to 8th. But when reading through the spell, I realized I had a ton of questions. The spell addressed damaging spell effects, but what about nondamaging effects? Could a caster under the effect of *ghostform* be dominated or slowed? Or gain the benefit of allied spells? On perusing the *Monster Manual,* I realized that this wasn't an omission in the spell, but rather in the incorporeal subtype itself. Luckily, we were working *Monster Manual III* simultaneously, in which we'd already planned to release an updated glossary. The changes to the incorporeal subtype were made and entered, and now ghosts everywhere can rejoice that they now know whether or not they can be affected by the *control undead* spell.

—Chris Thomasson, editor

Influence and Interaction

Certain skills allow you persuade, fool, and otherwise influence others in the game world. Some of these skills can be used against player characters as well, but players decide what their characters do unless those characters are magically compelled to do otherwise.

Use the following table to determine the effectiveness of checks (usually Diplomacy) made to influence the attitude of a nonplayer character.

Influencing NPC Attitudes

Initial	—— New Attitude (DC to achieve) ——				
Attitude	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	< 20	20	25	35	50
Unfriendly	< 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	< 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	< 1	1	20
Helpful	—	—	—	< 1	1

Attitude	Means	Possible Activities
Hostile	Will take risks to hurt you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't much care	Socially expected interaction
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to help you	Protect, back up, heal, aid

BLUFF (CHA)

To con, misdirect, and mislead, you make a Bluff check. A Bluff check is opposed by the target's Sense Motive check. See the following table for examples of different kinds of bluffs and the Sense Motive modifier for each one. A Bluff check made as part of general interaction is at least a full-round action, but it can take much longer if you try something elaborate. A bluff requires interaction between you and the target. Creatures unaware of you can't be bluffed.

Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. It's unfavorable if the bluff is hard to believe or the act that the target is asked to undertake goes against its self-interest, nature, personality, orders, or the like. You can distinguish between a bluff that fails because the target doesn't believe it and one that fails because it asks too much of the target. If the target gets a +10 bonus on its Sense Motive check because the bluff demands something risky, and the Sense Motive check succeeds by 10 or less, then the target didn't so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. A target that succeeds by 11 or more has seen through the bluff.

A successful Bluff check indicates that the target reacts as you wish, at least for 1 round but sometimes less, or believes something that you want it to believe. A failed Bluff check in social interaction makes the target too suspicious for you to try again in the same circumstances.

Bluff and Sense Motive

Circumstances	Sense Motive Modifier
Target wants to believe you	–5
Bluff is believable and doesn't affect the target much	+0
Bluff is a little hard to believe or puts the target at risk	+5
Bluff is hard to believe or puts the target at great risk	+10
Bluff is almost too incredible to consider	+20

Secret Messages

You can use Bluff to get a message across to another without others understanding it. You make a Bluff check as part of communicating (no action). The DC is 15 for simple messages or 20 for complex messages, especially those that rely on getting across new information. Failure by 4 or less means you can't get the message across. Failure by 5 or more means that some false information has been implied or inferred. The Bluff check is made secretly, so that you can't be sure you got the message across.

You can keep trying to communicate a message, but you can attempt the exchange only once per round. Each retry carries the same chance of miscommunication.

Heckling

You can heckle a performer by taking 1 minute and making a Bluff check opposed by the performer's Concentration check. If you win, the performer must make a new Perform check with a –2 penalty plus an additional –2 for every 5 points by which you won the opposed check. If you lose, the audience sides with the performer, who gains a +2 circumstance bonus on the Perform check for that performance. Some audience members might be unfriendly toward you if the performer's Perform check is successful. You can make only one check to heckle during a given performance.

DIPLOMACY (CHA)

Diplomacy involves etiquette, social grace, tact, subtlety, and a way with words. You can change the attitudes of others with a successful Diplomacy check that takes at least 1 minute. A rushed Diplomacy check can be made as a full-round action, but you take a –10 penalty on the check. Even if the initial Diplomacy check succeeds, an NPC can be persuaded only so far, so pushing further might do more harm than good. If the initial check fails, the NPC has probably become more firmly committed to his position, so a retry is futile. See the Influencing NPC Attitudes table for basic DCs.

Haggling

You can use the Diplomacy skill to lower the asking price of an item by taking 1 minute to haggle. To do so, make a Diplomacy check, taking the typical DC for influencing an NPC and adding the seller's Diplomacy modifier to the DC. Most sellers start out indifferent. If you improve the seller's attitude to helpful, you receive a 10% discount. If you worsen the seller's attitude to unfriendly or worse, that seller refuses to sell anything to you for at least 24 hours.

Mediating

To mediate a disagreement between parties that are not already hostile toward one another, you must spend a day and succeed in adjusting each group's attitude to friendly or better toward the other party in the negotiation. To do so, make a Diplomacy check with the normal DC for influencing an NPC, adding the group leader's Diplomacy modifier to the DC. The DC increases by 5 if the two parties are of different cultures or races. You can take a –10 penalty on the check to attempt mediation in 1 hour.

As long at least one side remains unfriendly or better, you can retry a Diplomacy check made to mediate a disagreement.

Other Checks

In negotiations, participants roll opposed Diplomacy checks, and the winner gains the advantage. Opposed checks also resolve situations when two advocates or diplomats plead opposite cases in a hearing before a third party.

DISGUISE (CHA)

Use this skill to change your own appearance or someone else's. The effort requires at least a few props, some makeup, and 1d3×10 minutes of work. A disguise can include an apparent change of height or weight amounting to no more than one-tenth of the original.

Your Disguise check result determines how good the disguise is, and the check is opposed by observers' Spot checks. If you don't draw any attention to yourself, others don't get to make Spot checks. If you come to the attention of observers who are suspicious, it can be assumed that such observers are taking 10 on their Spot checks.

You can make only one Disguise check per disguise, even if several observers are making Spot checks against it. The Disguise check is made secretly, so that you can't be sure how good the result is. You can try to redo a failed disguise, but once others know that a disguise was attempted, they become more suspicious.

The effectiveness of your disguise depends in part on how much you're attempting to change your appearance, according to the following table.

DISGUISE

Alterations	Check Modifier
Disguised as different gender[1]	–2
Disguised as different race[1]	–2
Disguised as different age category[1]	–2[2]
Form-altering magic[3]	+10
Minor details only	+5

1 These modifiers stack; use all that apply.

2 Per step of difference between your actual age category and your disguised age category. The steps are: young (younger than adulthood), adulthood, middle age, old, and venerable.

3 Magic that alters your form, such as *alter self, disguise self, polymorph,* and *shapechange.* See specific spell descriptions.

Observers

Usually, an individual makes a Spot check to see through your disguise immediately upon meeting you and each hour thereafter. If you casually meet many different creatures, each for a short time, check once per hour, using an average Spot modifier for the group.

Divination magic that allows people to see through illusions (such as *true seeing*) doesn't penetrate a mundane disguise, but it can negate the magical component of a magically enhanced one.

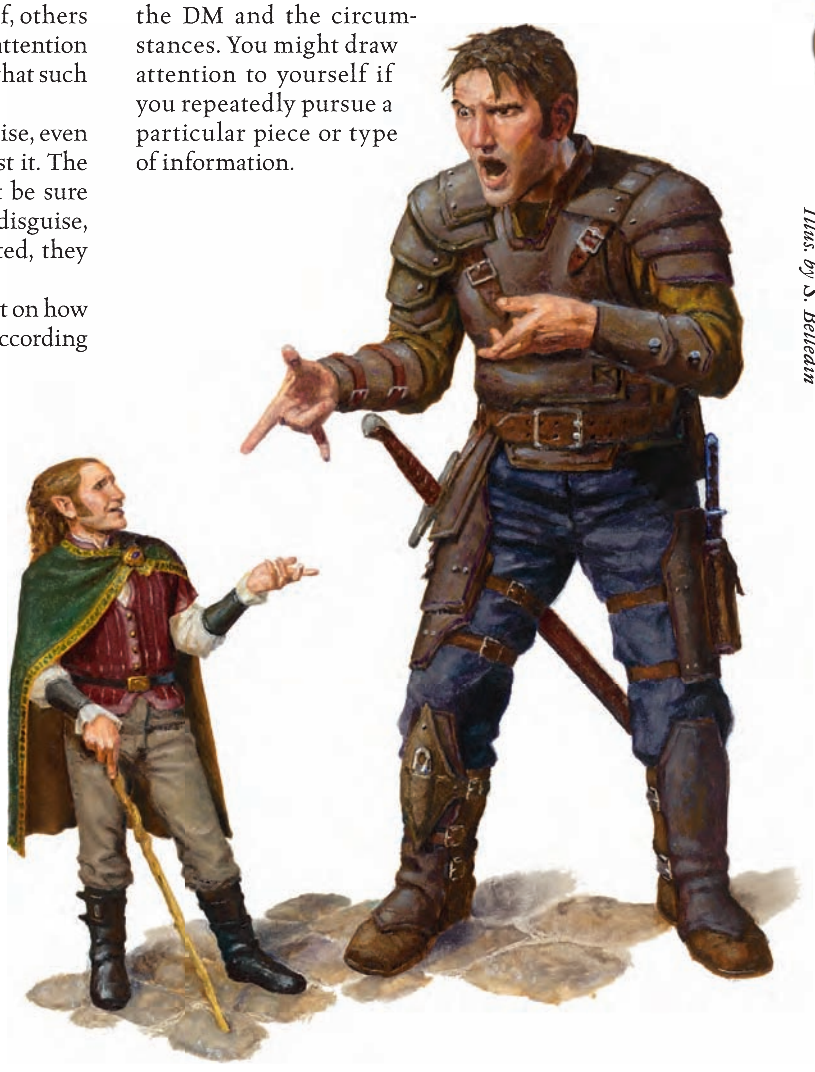
If you're impersonating a particular individual, those who know what that person looks like get a bonus on their Spot checks according to the Spotting a Disguise table. Furthermore, they're automatically considered to be suspicious of you, so opposed checks are always called for.

SPOTTING A DISGUISE

Familiarity	Check Bonus
Recognizes on sight	+4
Friends or associates	+6
Close friends	+8
Intimate	+10

GATHER INFORMATION (CHA)

With 1d4+1 hours, money for buying drinks and making friends, and a Gather Information check, you to learn about a topic you're interested in. The higher your check result, the better the information. If you want to find out about something specific or secret, the DC is higher, as determined by the DM and the circumstances. You might draw attention to yourself if you repeatedly pursue a particular piece or type of information.



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GATHER INFORMATION

Information	DC	Examples
Public	10	Major news, local government issues, local guild structure
Private	15	Gossip, private club, military figures
Exclusive	20	Scandals, invitation-only club, local criminals
Secret	25	Secrets, espionage group, criminal cartel
Unknown	30	Shadow government, underground cult
Specific	+5	A particular noble's affairs; who robbed the bank

INTIMIDATE (CHA)

Intimidation includes verbal threats and menacing body language. You intimidate a target by taking 1 minute of interaction and making an Intimidate check opposed by the target's modified level check (1d20 + character level or Hit Dice + target's Wis bonus [if any] + target's modifiers on saves against fear). You gain a +4 bonus on your Intimidate check for every size category that you are larger than your target. Conversely, you take a –4 penalty on your Intimidate check for every size category that you are smaller than your target. A creature that is immune to fear can't be intimidated, nor can nonintelligent creatures.

If you can intimidate the target and you beat its check result, you can treat that target as friendly, but only for the purpose of activities undertaken while it remains intimidated. A target stays intimidated for as long as it remains in your presence, and for 1d6×10 minutes afterward. After this time, the target's default attitude toward you shifts to unfriendly or, if normally unfriendly, to hostile.

If the target's check result beats yours by 5 or more, the target provides you with incorrect or useless information, or otherwise frustrates your efforts. Since the DM makes the target's check, you might not know you've been thwarted.

Demoralize Opponent

You can also use Intimidate as a standard action against an opponent that you threaten in melee combat and that can see you, weakening that opponent's resolve in combat. To do so, make an Intimidate check opposed by the target's modified level check. If you win, the target becomes shaken for 1 round.

Duel of Wills

Before initiative is rolled in a combat situation, you can initiate a duel of wills against an opponent within 30 feet that you have line of sight to (and vice versa). Doing this doesn't take an action. Only creatures that have Intelligence scores of 3 or higher can engage in a duel of wills, and you can attempt only one duel of wills per encounter. When you fix your eyes on your opponent, that creature has three options.

Submit: The opponent takes a –2 penalty on its initiative check and a –1 penalty on attack rolls against you for 1 round.

Ignore: The opponent ignores you, but if you succeed on a DC 15 Intimidate check, you receive a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls against that opponent for 1 round.

Participate: You and the opponent make opposed Intimidate checks. The winner gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls against the loser. The loser takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls and damage rolls against the winner. These modifiers last for the duration of the encounter.

SENSE MOTIVE (WIS)

This skill represents sensitivity to the body language, speech habits, and mannerisms of others, as well as social intuition and awareness. Sense Motive is used to oppose Bluff checks—once per Bluff check used against you. You can also use this skill to determine when something odd is going on or to assess someone's trustworthiness.

Assess Opponent

As a standard action, you can use Sense Motive to ascertain how tough a challenge a visible target within 30 feet poses for you. If you have seen the target in combat, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on the check. This check is opposed by the target's Bluff check. If you succeed, you know your opponent belongs to one of two threat categories—its actual one, and the one lower or higher (50% chance of either). If you win by 10 or more, you know the actual threat. If the target wins, you gain no useful information. If the target wins by 5 to 9, you believe the target to be one category stronger or weaker than it really is (50% chance of either). If the target wins by 10 or more, your assessment is off by two categories (higher or lower; 50% chance of either).

Opponent's CR is . . .	Result
Under your level or HD by 4 or more	A pushover
Under your level or HD by 1 to 3	Easy
Equal to your level or HD	A fair fight
Exceeds your level or HD by up to 3	A tough challenge
Exceeds your level or HD by 4 or more	A dire threat

A target that is particularly vulnerable to your typical attack routine (a vampire facing a high-level good-aligned cleric) is considered one category less challenging. One that is resistant to your typical attack routine (a golem against a sneak attacker) registers as one category more challenging.

Discern Secret Message

You can use Sense Motive to detect that a hidden message is being transmitted by means of the Bluff skill. In this case, your Sense Motive check is opposed by the Bluff check of the creature transmitting the message. For each piece of information relating to the message that you're missing, you take a –2 penalty on your Sense Motive check. If you succeed by 4 or less, you know that something hidden is being communicated, but you can't learn anything specific about its content. If you beat the DC by 5 or more, you intercept and understand the message. If you fail by 4 or less, you don't detect any hidden communication. If you fail by 5 or more, you infer some false information.

You can check against each use of the Bluff skill to communicate a secret message.

Hunch

With a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check and 1 minute, you can make a gut assessment of the social situation. You can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong, such as when you're talking to an impostor. Alternatively, you can get the feeling that someone is trustworthy. If you fail, you can't try again.

Sense Enchantment

By observing someone for a minute, you can tell if that person's behavior is being influenced by an enchantment effect, even if that person isn't aware of it. The usual DC is 25, but if the target is dominated (see *dominate person*), the DC is only 15 because of the limited range of the target's activities. If you fail, you can't try again.

HIRELINGS

When the PCs need to hire someone to perform a task, hirelings are the NPCs they employ. Hirelings don't make decisions. They do as they're told. Thus, even if they go on an adventure with the PCs, they gain no experience and don't affect any calculations involving the party level. Hirelings must be treated fairly and well, or they might leave or turn against their employers.

The following table gives an idea of the daily wage that hirelings of various types expect or demand. The prices on the table are for long-term retention of services. Hiring someone for just a day or two might cost two or three times the indicated price. The prices don't include materials, tools, or weapons the hireling might need to do the job.

Hirelings might require hazard pay as high as double normal pay if placed in particularly dangerous situations. In addition to demanding hazard pay, hirelings placed in great danger might become unfriendly.

HIRELINGS

Hireling	Pay/Day	Services
Alchemist*	1 gp	Works with chemicals. Includes apothecaries.
Animal tender	15 cp	Cares for animals. Includes grooms, shepherds, shearers, and swineherds.
Architect	5 sp	Plans large building projects. Includes engineers and shipwrights.
Artisan	6 sp	Produces works of art.
Barrister	1 gp	A lawyer.
Clerk	4 sp	Keeps accounts. Includes interpreters.
Cook	1 sp	Prepares meals, often for large groups.
Entertainer	4 sp	Performs works of art. Includes minstrels, actors, singers, dancers, and orators.
Laborer	1 sp	Does unskilled labor. Includes gravediggers, maids, and porters, among others.
Craftsperson*	3 sp	Works in a trade. Includes carpenters, dyers, jewelers, tinkers, and weavers, among others.
Mercenary	2 sp	Fights for pay—a 1st-level warrior.
Mercenary cavalry	4 sp	Fights from horseback—a 1st-level warrior.
Mercenary leader	6 sp	Fights for pay and leads other mercs—2nd-level warrior. Add 3 sp/day per level above 2nd.
Sage	2+ gp	Provides information and research services.
Scribe	3 sp	Writes. Includes scriveners.
Smith	4 sp*	Works metal. Includes armorers, blacksmiths, locksmiths, metalsmiths, and minters, among others.
Teamster	3 sp	Drives a wagon or cart.
Valet/lackey	2 sp	Performs various specialized and personal duties.

* If paid to create a specific item, use item prices and working times instead.

NPC SPELLCASTING

Assuming that the PCs can find a caster of the needed level who is amenable to helping them out, the NPC charges 10 gp per spell level × caster level (5 gp × caster level for a 0-level spell). If a spell has an expensive material component, the NPC expects the clients to pay for those expenses in addition to the base cost. If the spell requires a focus component (other than a divine focus), the NPC expects the PCs to pay 10% of the cost of the focus. Finally, if the spell has an XP component, the NPC charges an additional 5 gp for each experience point expended.

OPENING ROLEPLAYING'S DOOR

Since D&D is a game in which contact with others usually ends in a fight, setting up an encounter when you want to give PCs a chance to talk to a monster or a dangerous-looking NPC can be tricky. And you can't really blame players when the difference between smart and dead can hinge on the result of an initiative check, and taking that –10 for a rushed Diplomacy check can be a harrowing affair.

Try this: Specifically tell the players that their potential allies are trying to parley, roll the check out in the open, and even flavor the description based on the result of the roll. Although you should never tell a player that his character's attitude has changed, a mix of die rolls and stirring narrative can open the door for some very flavorful social encounters. Of course, if you botch that roll, roleplaying the hurling of unintentional insults at PCs can be great fun too!

—Stephen Radney-MacFarland, developer

Initiative

Every round, each combatant gets to do something. The combatants' initiative check results, counted from highest to lowest, determine the order in which they act.

INITIATIVE CHECKS

At the start of a battle, if both sides are aware at the same time and can interact, each combatant makes an initiative check, which is a Dexterity check. The results show what order combatants are acting in, counting down from highest result to lowest. Each combatant acts in turn on his or her initiative count. In every round that follows, the combatants act in the same order unless one of them does something that results in an initiative change.

If two or more combatants have the same initiative check result, the combatants who are tied act in order of highest initiative modifier first. If a tie persists, the tied combatants roll again to determine which one of them goes first.

Usually, the DM writes the names of the combatants down in initiative count order so that combat moves along smoothly during subsequent rounds.

MONSTER INITIATIVE

The DM makes a single initiative check for monsters and other opponents, so each player gets a turn each round and the DM also gets one turn. At the DM's option, however, each monster or group of monsters can make a separate initiative check.

FLAT-FOOTED

At the start of a battle, before your first regular turn in the initiative order, you're flat-footed. You're denied your Dexterity bonus to AC while flat-footed. A flat-footed creature can't make attacks of opportunity.

INACTION

Even if you can't take actions, you retain your initiative count for the duration of the encounter.

SURPRISE

An encounter can begin in one of three situations. When the DM decides it's possible for either side to become aware of the other, he uses Spot checks, Listen checks, and so on to determine which of these three cases comes into play.

- Both sides become aware of each other at the same time. Then normal initiative checks ensue.
- One side becomes aware of the other and can act first.
- Some, but not all, creatures on one or both sides become aware of the other side and can act.

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SURPRISE ROUND

If some but not all the combatants are aware of their opponents, a surprise round happens before regular rounds begin. Any combatants aware of the opponents can act during the surprise round, so they make initiative checks. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents can act. They're restricted to a single standard action or move action during the surprise round. They can also take free actions during the surprise round, at the DM's discretion.

Combatants who are unaware at the start of battle don't get to act during the surprise round. Unaware combatants are flat-footed.

If no one or everyone is surprised, the surprise round doesn't occur.

One Side Aware

In this case, the DM determines how much time the aware side has before the unaware side can react. Sometimes, the unaware side has no time to do anything before the aware side gets a chance to act. The aware side gets a surprise round. After that, both sides make initiative checks to determine the order in which the combatants act. Other times, the aware side has a few rounds to prepare. The DM tracks time in rounds at this point to determine how much the aware combatants can accomplish. Once the two sides can interact, the aware combatants receive a surprise round.

If the aware side alerts the unaware side before the two can interact, then both sides are treated as aware.

Some on Both Sides Aware

In this case, only the combatants that are aware can act. These creatures receive a surprise round.

NEW COMBATANTS

If, in the course of a battle between two sides, another group enters the battle, that group should come into the combat at the beginning of the next round. The following rules apply to this situation, whether or not the new group is allied with one or more existing sides involved in the encounter.

NEWCOMERS AWARE

If any (or all) of the newcomers are aware of one or both of the sides in a battle, they take their actions before anyone else. In effect, they go first in the initiative sequence. Their initiative check result is considered to be 1 higher than the highest initiative check result among the original participants in the encounter. If differentiation is needed for the actions of the newcomers, they act in order of their Dexterity scores, highest to lowest. The reason for this rule is twofold.

- Since they're aware, but no way exists for them to take an action ahead of everyone else (because the encounter has already started), they go first to simulate their advantage. This happens whether the other sides are aware of the newcomers or not.
- Placing the newcomers at the beginning of the round means that those who had the highest initiative check results prior to the newcomers' arrival are the first combatants to have an opportunity to react to them. This is an important advantage for those who have high places in the initiative order.

NEWCOMERS UNAWARE

If any or all of the newcomers aren't aware of the other sides when they enter the encounter, the newcomers still come into play at the beginning of the round, but they make initiative checks normally. If one of the other combatants involved in the encounter has a higher initiative check result than one or more of the newcomers, that combatant can react to those newcomers before they can act.

SIMULTANEOUS ACTIVITY

When playing out a combat scene or some other activity for which time is measured in rounds, remember that all the combatants' actions occur simultaneously. The combatants' acting in turn according to the initiative count is a situation necessary for order in game play, but it's an abstraction. This sequential order of play can lead to situations when something significant happens to a combatant at the end of that creature's turn but before other creatures have acted in the same round. It's up to the DM whether other combatants who have yet to act during the round can react to an event that happens to another combatant in this way.

FIXING INITIATIVE

Fixing 2nd Edition's initiative system was a priority for the 3rd Edition design team. 2nd Edition's system effectively made you go around the table two times per round. Each player had to first declare an intended action, and then resolve the declared actions—many of which became impossible due to events in the combat. Initiative modifiers for different weapons and spells caused this "first declare, then resolve" system. Plus, it was an example of a "low is good" roll in the system, and we wanted to get rid of those.

We experimented briefly with using a "category" initiative system such as the one that appeared in *Player's Option: Combat and Tactics,* but ultimately Jonathan Tweet brought the winning solution with him when he joined the 3rd Edition design team. I wasn't sure about it at first, but a couple of playtests quickly demonstrated the superiority of Jonathan's cyclical initiative system. It's twice as fast as the 2nd Edition system, it saves a roll each round, and it's absolutely fair.

—Rich Baker, designer

Injury, Healing, and Death

When a creature takes hit point damage, that damage can be lethal or nonlethal. Lethal damage can result in injury or death, while nonlethal damage can cause loss of fighting capability and unconsciousness. Injured creatures can recover and heal, but sometimes they die. Fortunately in D&D, death isn't always the end.

LETHAL DAMAGE

Most attacks deal lethal damage, which is subtracted from a creature's hit points. Hit points measure how hard a creature is to kill. Hit points represent the ability to take physical punishment and keep going, and the ability to turn a serious blow into a less serious one. For some creatures, hit points can represent divine favor or inner power.

LOSS OF HIT POINTS

An uninjured creature has its full normal hit points. As it takes lethal damage, subtract that damage from its hit points, leaving it with its current hit points. Current hit points go down with damage and go back up when a creature heals. Damage doesn't slow a creature down until its current hit points reach 0 or fewer—see Injury.

Massive Damage

If a single attack deals 50 points of damage or more and doesn't kill the target outright, that creature must make a DC 15 Fortitude save. If this save fails, the creature dies regardless of its current hit points. Taking 50 points of damage or more from multiple attacks isn't considered massive damage as long as no single attack deals 50 or more points of damage by itself.

CHANGES IN HIT POINTS

If a creature's Constitution score increases, that creature gains 1 hit point per Hit Die for every point by which its Constitution modifier goes up. Such hit points aren't the same as temporary hit points. They can be healed with magic and even naturally, if the effect that caused them to appear remains long enough.

If a creature's Constitution score drops, that creature loses 1 hit point per Hit Die for every point by which its Constitution modifier drops. Loss of Constitution can't reduce a creature's full normal hit points to less than 1 hit point per Hit Die. It can reduce a wounded creature's current hit points to 0 or fewer. A creature reduced to 0 Constitution dies regardless of its current hit points.

Temporary Hit Points

Through magic or the use of special abilities, a creature can gain a number of hit points called temporary hit points. When a creature gains temporary hit points, note its current hit point total. If the temporary hit points go away through a means other than damage, the creature's hit points drop to its current hit point total. If the creature has taken damage so that its hit points are equal to or lower than the noted current hit point total when the temporary hit points go away, all the temporary hit points have already been lost. The creature's hit point total doesn't drop further.

Temporary hit points gained from multiple applications of the same effect don't stack. Instead, the highest number of temporary hit points gained from that effect apply.

If temporary hit points are gained from multiple, different sources that stack, keep track of those sources and when they were gained separately. Any damage taken is first subtracted from the oldest effect that granted temporary hit points. When those are gone, subtract damage from the next oldest effect, and so on.

When temporary hit points are lost, they can't be restored like normal hit points can be, even by magic.

NONLETHAL DAMAGE

Sometimes a creature is clocked in a fistfight or tired out by a forced march. This sort of trauma doesn't kill, but it can knock a creature out or make it faint.

DEALING NONLETHAL DAMAGE

Certain attacks deal nonlethal damage, such as a normal human's unarmed strike. Other factors, such as a hot environment (see page 155), can also deal nonlethal damage.

TRACKING NONLETHAL DAMAGE

Nonlethal damage isn't the same as hit point damage, so don't deduct nonlethal damage from a creature's current hit points. Instead, keep a running total of how much nonlethal damage a creature accumulates.

EFFECTS OF NONLETHAL DAMAGE

When a creature's nonlethal damage equals its current hit points, that creature is staggered. A creature falls unconscious when its nonlethal damage exceeds that creature's current hit points. It doesn't matter whether the nonlethal damage equals or exceeds a creature's current hit points because the nonlethal damage has gone up or because that creature's current hit points have gone down.

Staggered

A staggered creature is so roughed up that it can take only a standard action or a move action in each round. A staggered creature ceases being staggered when its current hit points once again exceed its nonlethal damage.

Unconscious

An unconscious creature falls to the ground, helpless. Spellcasters who fall unconscious and recover retain any spellcasting ability they had before going unconscious.

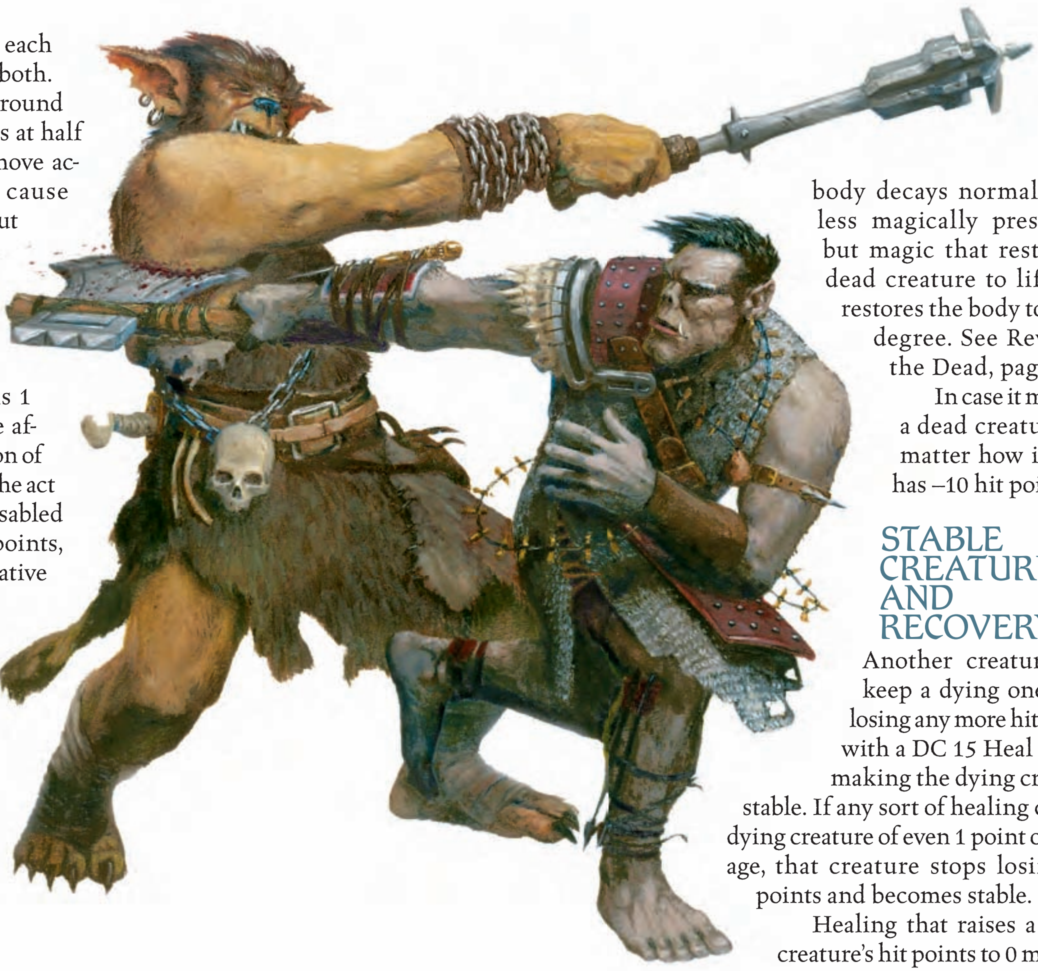
INJURY

Injury isn't hampering until it disables a creature (at 0 current hit points). When a creature is more severely injured, it might die of its wounds.

DISABLED

A creature that has 0 current hit points, or one that has negative current hit points but has become stable and conscious, is disabled. A disabled creature can take a single move action or standard action each round, but not both. It can't take full-round actions. It moves at half speed. Taking move actions doesn't cause further injury, but performing any standard action, or any other act the DM deems strenuous, deals 1 point of damage after the completion of that act. Unless the act increased the disabled creature's hit points, it now has negative hit points and is dying.

Creatures that are not living (such as constructs, undead, and deathless) are destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points.



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DYING

A dying creature has –1 to –9 current hit points. It's unconscious and can take no actions. On that creature's initiative count each round, starting with the round in which the creature dropped below 0 hit points, it rolls d% to see whether it becomes stable. It has a 10% chance to become stable. If not, it loses 1 hit point. If a dying creature reaches –10 hit points, it's dead.

DEAD

A creature becomes dead when its current hit points are reduced to –10, its Constitution drops to 0, or it's killed outright by massive damage or some other death-dealing effect. The creature's soul leaves its body. Dead creatures can't benefit from normal or magical healing, but they can be restored to life by magic. When spellcasters die, all prepared spells stored in their mind are wiped away. A dead body decays normally unless magically preserved, but magic that restores a dead creature to life also restores the body to some degree. See Reviving the Dead, page 75.

In case it matters, a dead creature, no matter how it died, has –10 hit points.

STABLE CREATURES AND RECOVERY

Another creature can keep a dying one from losing any more hit points with a DC 15 Heal check, making the dying creature stable. If any sort of healing cures a dying creature of even 1 point of damage, that creature stops losing hit points and becomes stable.

Healing that raises a dying creature's hit points to 0 makes it conscious and disabled. Healing that raises its hit points to 1 or more makes it fully functional again.

A stable creature that has been tended by a healer or that has been magically healed eventually regains consciousness and recovers hit points naturally. If the creature has no one to tend it, however, its life is still in danger.

Recovering with Help

One hour after a tended, dying creature becomes stable, roll d%. It has a 10% chance of becoming conscious, at which point it's disabled. If it remains unconscious, it has the same chance to revive and become disabled every hour. Even if unconscious, it recovers hit points naturally. The creature is back to normal when its hit points rise to 1 or higher.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDE

I have a house rule in my D&D campaign that says when a character is dying, the player of that character isn't allowed to announce how close to death the character is. If the other party members want to know how close the dying character is to –10 hit points, one of them needs to move adjacent to the dying character and make a DC 10 Heal check as a standard action. As a DM, I get prickly when I hear a player brazenly declare, "Hey guys, I'm down to –8 hit points, and I need someone to stabilize me before I croak!" That, folks, is called *metagaming*. It undermines the urgency and spoils the tension of not knowing just how much time the character has before he bites the big one. I'd rather see this knowledge revealed in an in-game context.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

Recovering without Help

A creature that becomes stable on its own (by making the 10% roll while dying) and that has no one to tend to it still loses hit points, just at a slower rate. It has a 10% chance each hour of becoming conscious. Each time it fails this hourly roll to become conscious, it loses 1 hit point and doesn't recover hit points through natural healing.

Once it becomes conscious and disabled, an unaided creature still doesn't heal naturally. Instead, each day it has a 10% chance to start healing naturally (starting with the day it becomes conscious). Otherwise, it loses 1 hit point. Once an unaided creature starts recovering hit points naturally, it's no longer in danger of losing hit points in this way.

HEALING

After taking damage, a creature can recover hit points through natural healing or through magical healing. Some creatures can heal at an amazing rate. Such creatures have fast healing or regeneration.

NATURAL HEALING

If, during a 24-hour period, a creature gets a full 8 hours of sleep or equivalent rest (depending on the creature's race), that creature recovers 1 hit point per Hit Die or character level, whichever is more. Any significant interruption, such as combat, during the rest prevents healing. Complete bed rest for the entire 24 hours doubles this rate. Undertaking even light activity during a 24-hour period prevents this additional healing.

Long-Term Care

Someone can help another creature double its recovery of hit points by succeeding on a DC 15 Heal check. A healer can tend up to six patients. Providing this sort of care is light activity and requires medical supplies. You can't give long-term care to yourself.

HEALING NONLETHAL DAMAGE

Nonlethal damage heals at the rate of 1 point per hour per Hit Die or character level, whichever is more. When a spell or effect cures hit point damage, it also removes an equal amount of nonlethal damage.

MAGICAL HEALING

Various abilities and spells can restore hit points. Each such ability's or spell's description tells how the healing works.

FAST HEALING

Creatures that have fast healing have the extraordinary ability to regain hit points at an exceptional rate, usually 1 or more hit points per round. Except as noted here, fast healing is like natural healing. A creature that has taken both nonlethal and lethal damage heals the nonlethal damage first. Fast healing doesn't restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, nor does it allow a creature to regrow lost body parts. Unless otherwise noted in a creature's description, this ability doesn't allow lost body parts to be reattached.

REGENERATION

Creatures that have this extraordinary ability recover from wounds quickly and can even regrow or reattach severed body parts. Damage dealt to a creature that has this ability is treated as nonlethal damage. The creature heals nonlethal damage at a fixed rate per round. Certain attack forms, typically fire and acid, deal a regenerating creature lethal damage, which regeneration can't heal.

An attack that can cause instant death, such as an assassin's death attack, threatens a regenerating creature with death only if weapons that deal that creature lethal damage are used to deliver the attack. A regenerating creature that has been rendered unconscious through nonlethal damage can be killed with a coup de grace (see page 62). If the attack used to deliver a coup de grace is of a type that regeneration converts to nonlethal damage, the coup de grace fails to kill the regenerating creature.

Attack forms that don't deal hit point damage ignore regeneration. Regeneration doesn't restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation.

Regenerating creatures can regrow lost portions of their bodies and can reattach severed limbs or body parts. Severed parts that aren't reattached die and wither normally.

A creature must have a Constitution score to have the regeneration ability.

HEALING LIMIT

A creature can never recover more hit points than it has lost. Healing can't raise a creature's current hit points higher than its full normal hit point total.

DEATH

When a living creature (any creature not of the construct, deathless, or undead type) dies, its soul departs its body, leaves the Material Plane, travels through the Astral Plane, and goes to abide on the plane where that creature's deity resides. If the creature didn't worship a deity, its soul departs to the plane corresponding to its alignment.

DEATH ATTACKS

Some attacks and effects, known as death attacks, can kill outright. In most cases, a death attack allows the victim a Fortitude save to avoid the effect, but if the save fails, the target dies instantly.

- A death attack's victim can't be made stable.
- *Raise dead* doesn't work on a death attack's victim.
- *Death ward* protects creatures against death attacks.

DETERMINING CAUSE OF DEATH

Someone can take 10 minutes to use the Heal skill to determine what killed a dead creature, retrying as often as desired. The difficulty of this task depends on the nature of the death, as shown on the table below.

CAUSE OF DEATH

Cause	DC
Physical wounds	0
Natural hazard or suffocation	5
Spell with visible effects	10
Poison	15
Spell with no visible effects	20

Condition	DC Modifier
Per day since death	+5

REVIVING THE DEAD

Bringing someone back from the dead usually means retrieving the soul and returning it to the body. Several spells have the power to restore slain creatures to life. Constructs, elementals, outsiders, and undead creatures can't usually be returned to life. Magic can't bring back a creature that has died of old age.

Raise dead has a number of limitations. The caster can raise only creatures that have been dead up to one day per caster level. Casting time is 1 minute. The spell leaves a creature with a number of hit points equal to its Hit Dice, but the body of the raised creature must be whole—*raise dead* doesn't regenerate missing body parts. A creature that died with spells prepared has a 50% chance of losing any given spell upon being raised as if that spell had been cast. A spontaneous spellcaster has a 50% chance of losing any given unused spell slot as if it had been used to cast a spell. Paying someone to cast *raise dead* costs 450 gp (assuming a 9th-level caster) plus 5,000 gp for diamonds.

Revivify (*Spell Compendium* 176) brings back a dead creature if cast within 1 round of that creature's death. Casting time is 1 standard action. It works like *raise dead*, with the same restrictions, except a creature suffers no level loss, no Constitution loss, and no loss of spells or spell slots. The raised creature returns to life at –1 hit point and stable. Diamonds worth 1,000 gp are required as material components.

Reincarnate brings back creatures that have been dead one week or less—in entirely new bodies. Casting time is 10 minutes. The former body need not be whole, but the subject of the spell faces the normal consequences of revival (see below). Paying someone to cast *reincarnate* costs 280 gp (assuming a 7th-level caster) plus 1,000 gp for oils and unguents to be spread on the remains, making it the least expensive option. The drawback is that the player has no control over the form assumed, and the revived creature might no longer be welcome in civilized society.

Resurrection must be cast within 10 years per caster level of the time of death. It works as long as some small portion of the creature's body still exists. Casting time is 10 minutes. It heals the creature completely when cast, but the creature suffers the same level loss or Constitution loss as with *raise dead*. *Resurrection* can resurrect someone who has been turned into an undead creature and then destroyed. Paying someone to cast *resurrection* costs 910 gp (assuming a 13th-level caster) plus 10,000 gp for diamonds and holy water.

True resurrection, like *resurrection*, can be cast on a creature that has been dead for up to 10 years per caster level. No part of the deceased is required for the spell. Casting time is 10 minutes. *True resurrection* restores a creature completely, with no loss of level or Constitution. This spell can also resurrect elementals or outsiders, as well as someone who has been turned into an undead creature and then destroyed. Paying someone to cast *true resurrection* costs 1,530 gp (assuming a 17th-level caster) plus 25,000 gp for diamonds and holy water.

Consequences of Revival

Any creature brought back to life usually loses one level of experience (or one Hit Die), unless brought back with *true resurrection*. If the creature was 1st level or had only one Hit Die at the time of death, it permanently loses 2 points of Constitution instead of losing a level.

This level loss or Constitution loss can't be repaired by any mortal means, even *wish* or *miracle*. To regain the lost level, a revived character can earn experience through further adventuring. The revived character can improve Constitution normally using level-based ability score increases (at 4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, and 20th level).

Preventing Revival

Enemies can take steps to make it more difficult for a creature to be returned from the dead. Keeping the body prevents others from using *raise dead* or *resurrection* to restore the slain creature to life. Casting *trap the soul* prevents any sort of revivification unless the soul is first released.

Refusing to Be Revived

A soul can't be returned to life if it doesn't wish to be. A soul knows the name, alignment, and patron deity of the creature attempting to return it to its body. It can refuse to return on that basis.

DEATH PENALTY

I'm a strong supporter of character death, provided it unfolds naturally and heroically. I don't endorse the deliberate killing of player characters even when they deserve it, and I don't derive much satisfaction from ignominious or nonheroic deaths, such as when a character blunders into a death trap or is murdered in his sleep by a wandering monster. D&D campaigns benefit from the stories that arise when characters perish in glorious battle or sacrifice themselves for a great cause. They add realism to the campaign without necessarily spelling the end of it.

Sadly, death isn't the worst thing that can happen to a character in the D&D game. (That distinction falls to level loss, which totally sucks and is best avoided at all costs.) At its best, death might inspire the player to create a new character. At its worst, it's a costly inconvenience that keeps one player out of the game until his buddies spend the party's gold to cast a *true resurrection* spell. (*Raise dead* and *resurrection* don't cut it, folks. Save these spells for NPCs and cohorts.)

In my opinion, character death became much more tolerable with the addition of the *revivify* spell, which first appeared in *Miniatures Handbook* and has since migrated to the *Spell Compendium* supplement. Any party that isn't packing *revivify* scrolls is woefully underequipped. How does the spell work? When a character dies, the party cleric has 1 round to reach the corpse and cast this spell, restoring the character's life with no long-term penalties. The spell gives DMs a license to build tough encounters without guilt while simultaneously arming players with the means to undo the effects of an unfortunate die roll or missed saving throw. It has made character death a fun and exciting occurrence in my D&D campaign.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

Invisibility

The ability to move about unseen is advantageous, but it isn't foolproof.

SENSING

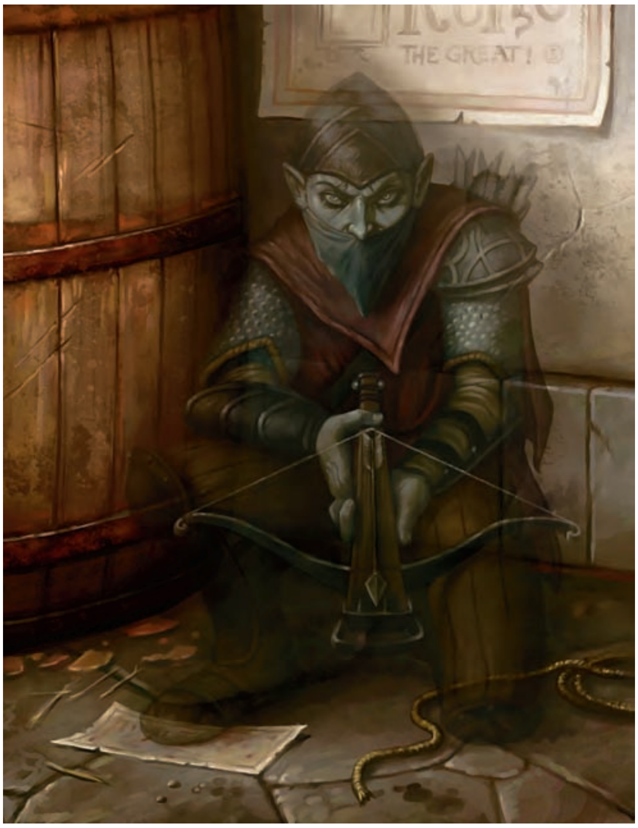
Invisibility makes a creature or object undetectable by vision, including darkvision. Although invisible targets can't be seen, they can be sensed in other ways.

Spot

An observer can notice the presence of an active invisible target within 30 feet by succeeding on a Spot check (DC = invisible creature's Hide check +20). The observer gains a hunch that "something's there" but can't see it or target it accurately with an attack. An invisible creature that is holding still is very hard to notice (DC = invisible creature's Hide check +30). An invisible inanimate object or an invisible, unliving creature holding still is nearly impossible to notice (DC 40 for an invisible object; DC = Hide check +40 for invisible creature). Treat a helpless invisible creature as an invisible inanimate object (DC 40). A Spot check that beats the DC by 20 pinpoints the invisible target's location, but that target still benefits from total concealment.

Listen

An observer can use hearing to find an invisible target that is making any sound by making a Listen check as a free action each round. A Listen check result at least equal to the invisible creature's Move Silently check result reveals that creature's presence. A successful check lets an observer hear an invisible creature "over there somewhere." A Listen check that beats the DC by 20 pinpoints the invisible creature's location, but the invisible creature still benefits from total concealment. In the case of an invisible object, the DM sets the DC to hear that object according to the Listen skill (see page 114).



Illus. by H. Lyon

LISTEN TO DETECT INVISIBLE CREATURES

Invisible Creature Is . . .	DC
In combat or speaking	0
Moving at up to half speed	Move Silently check result
Moving at more than half speed	Move Silently check result –5
Running or charging	Move Silently check result –20
Some distance away	+1 per 10 feet
Behind an obstacle (door)	+5
Behind an obstacle (stone wall)	+15

Touch

An observer can feel around to find an invisible target by making a touch attack with appendages or a weapon into two adjacent 5-foot squares using a standard action. If an invisible target is in the designated area, the touch attack must hit despite that target's total concealment. A touch attack that hits deals no damage but has successfully pinpointed the invisible target's current location. If the invisible target then moves, its location becomes unknown again.

Those struck by an invisible attacker know the location of that attacker, unless the attack came from farther away than 5 feet. In this case, the struck targets know the general location of the attacker but haven't pinpointed the exact location. If the invisible attacker moves, its location is once again unknown.

Special Senses

Some special senses thwart or more easily deal with the advantages granted by invisibility. A creature that has the scent ability can smell an invisible target as easily as a visible one. Blindsight allows a creature to interact with invisible targets as if they were visible. A creature that has the Blind-Fight feat is more effective against invisible attackers. Invisibility doesn't thwart *detect* spells.

HARMING

If a creature tries to attack an invisible target whose location has been pinpointed, the attack resolves normally, but the invisible target benefits from total concealment. A particularly large and slow target might get a smaller or no miss chance, at the DM's option.

If a creature tries to attack an invisible target whose location hasn't been pinpointed, the attacker chooses the space where the attack is directed. If the invisible target is there, the attack resolves normally with the usual miss chance for total concealment. If the target isn't there and the attacker is a PC, the DM rolls the miss chance as if the target were there, doesn't let the player see the result, and tells that player the character has missed. That way the player doesn't know whether the attack missed because the target isn't there or because of the miss chance.

ATTACKS

An invisible attacker gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls against opponents that can't see it. Opponents are denied

Illus. by T. Giorello

their Dexterity bonuses to AC against an invisible attacker's attacks.

Invisible creatures can't use gaze attacks.

ENVIRONMENT

If an invisible creature picks up a visible object, that object remains visible. An invisible creature can pick up a small visible item and hide that object under clothing or in a similar place, rendering the object effectively invisible.

An invisible burning torch still gives off light, as does an invisible object that has a *light* spell (or similar spell) cast upon it.

Invisible creatures leave tracks. They can be tracked normally. Footprints in sand, mud, or other soft surfaces can give enemies clues to an invisible creature's location.

An invisible target in the water displaces water, revealing its location. The invisible target is still hard to see and benefits from concealment.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

A few creatures are invisible in combination with other factors. Ethereal creatures are invisible. Since ethereal creatures aren't materially present, Spot checks, Listen checks, Scent, Blind-Fight, and blindsight don't help locate them. Incorporeal creatures can be invisible. Blind-Fight, blindsight, and scent don't help creatures find or attack invisible, incorporeal creatures, but Spot checks can help. Listen checks don't help to locate an invisible, incorporeal creature unless that creature wants to be heard.

GRELL FOOD

Ah, *invisibility*! That secure haven. When you first gain access to it, you're sure that no monster, no matter how foul, could possibly detect you under your warm safety blanket. Enter the grell.

I was playing a rogue/fighter in a playtest of *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil,* run by Dave Noonan. We had cleared the infamous moat house and reached the well room. For those who haven't played this adventure, this room features a hole in the floor that descends into darkness. If you move through the story too slowly, which our group had, the rope for the well has been cut, although coils of it still remain at the top.

The party's decision, recommended by our wizard (played by Jesse Decker), was to cast *spider climb* and *invisibility* on my character, he being the sneakiest of our crew. I would then climb through the hole and scout out a bit. I was wary of this plan, since I knew the fate that often befalls "scouts" in D&D. Nevertheless, I agreed and proceeded downward.

I made it just far enough into the room to be more than one quick yank from safety when the grell struck. Of course, with its blindsight, it knew exactly where I was, *invisibility* or no. I think I made the first two saves, but failed the third. Up at the top of the well, the rope quivered, jerked once, then went slack.

Who painted the big bull's-eye on Grell Food's back? Maybe he was doomed because he was Monkey Grip wielding a mercurial greatsword. Who knows? Mr. Noonan only smirks a bit whenever he hears this story retold—as does Jesse, now that I think about it. But the lesson I learned that day was that no matter how warm your blanket, or how well it covers you, there are things that will tear it right off you and devour you alive.

—Chris Thomasson, editor

Language

In the diverse world of D&D, many languages are spoken, and it's easy for people to learn multiple tongues. All characters can speak Common. Nonhumans also speak a racial language, and some classes give access to languages. The following table shows common languages and their alphabets. Other languages exist, spoken by particular kinds of creatures that have their own tongue.

Literate characters can read and write all the languages they speak. The learned can decipher lost tongues and create codes. The unscrupulous can use written language to take advantage of others.

Languages

Language (Alphabet)
Abyssal (Infernal)
Aquan (Elven)
Auran (Draconic)
Celestial (Celestial)
Common (Common)
Draconic (Draconic)
Druidic (Druidic)
Dwarven (Dwarven)
Elven (Elven)
Giant (Dwarven)
Gnome (Dwarven)
Goblin (Dwarven)
Gnoll (Common)
Halfling (Common)
Ignan (Draconic)
Infernal (Infernal)
Orc (Dwarven)
Sylvan (Elven)
Terran (Dwarven)
Undercommon (Elven)

DECIPHER SCRIPT (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

If you're trained in Decipher Script, you can take 1 minute to decipher writing in an unfamiliar language or a message written in an incomplete or archaic form. Tasks and DCs are delineated on the table below. The DM makes the Decipher Script check for you. If the check succeeds, you understand the general content of a piece of writing about one page long (or the equivalent). If the check fails, you must succeed on a DC 5 Wisdom check, which the DM also makes in secret, or else draw a false conclusion about the text. If you fail, you can't try again.

Decipher Script

Task	DC
Simple text	20
Standard text	25
Exotic or old text	30

Creating a Cipher

You can use the Decipher Script skill to create a private cipher by taking a week to accomplish the task. This code system allows you (or anyone with the proper key) to record information without the risk of others reading it. Only you or someone who has the proper decoding information can readily read documents you create using your private cipher.

Others that have ranks in the Decipher Script skill can attempt to decipher the code. The DC for such a decoding attempt is 10 + your total skill modifier at the time that you created the cipher. The first attempt to decipher a code system requires a day of uninterrupted work, and subsequent retries each take a week.

FORGERY (INT)

Use this skill to fake documents or to detect forgeries that others try to pass off. To forge documents and detect them, you must be able to read and write the required language.

Making a forgery requires writing materials appropriate to the document being forged, sufficient visual acuity to see details, wax for seals (if appropriate), and about 1 minute for a very short and simple document. A longer or more complex document takes 1d4 minutes per page.

To forge a document on which the handwriting isn't specific to a person, you need only to have seen a similar document before, and you gain a +8 bonus on your check. To forge a signature, you need an appropriate signature to copy, and you gain a +4 bonus on the check. To forge a longer document written as if by a particular person, a large sample of that person's handwriting is needed.

The Forgery check is made secretly, so that you're not sure how good your forgery is. Your Forgery check is opposed by the Forgery check of the person who examines the document to check its authenticity. Examiners gain modifiers on their checks if any of the conditions on the Examiner Conditions table exist.

A document that contradicts procedure, orders, or previous knowledge, or one that requires sacrifice from the person checking the document can increase suspicion. At the DM's option, increased suspicion creates more favorable circumstances for the examiner's opposing Forgery check.

Examiner Conditions

Examiner . . .	Check Modifier
Only casually reviews the document	–2
Doesn't know the handwriting	–2
Intimately knows the handwriting	+2
Doesn't know the document type	–2
Intimately knows the document type	+2

A retry is never possible after a particular examiner detects a particular forgery, but the forged document might still fool someone else. The Forgery check result for a particular document must be used whenever a different examiner reads that document. No examiner can attempt to detect a particular forgery more than once.

When a forgery is detected, the bearer of the forged documents often suffers legal troubles or worse.

Favorable Forgeries

At the DM's discretion, forged documents can grant a +2 circumstance bonus on a specific Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check. Unlike other bonuses, these apply only when you present the documents and the creature you're interacting with doesn't detect the forgery. If the forged documents are detected, the check they would have modified automatically fails.

Light and Darkness

Adventurers need a way to see in the dark and dangerous places they explore. Some creatures have darkvision, but everyone else needs light to see. Light comes from various sources—see the following table for the radius that a light source illuminates and how long the source lasts.

LIGHT SOURCES AND ILLUMINATION

Object	Bright	Shadowy	Duration
Candle	—[1]	5 ft.	1 hr.
Everburning torch	20 ft.	40 ft.	Permanent
Lamp, common	15 ft.	30 ft.	6 hr./pint
Lantern, bullseye[2]	60-ft. cone	120-ft. cone	6 hr./pint
Lantern, hooded	30 ft.	60 ft.	6 hr./pint
Sunrod	30 ft.	60 ft.	6 hr.
Torch	20 ft.	40 ft.	1 hr.

Spell	Bright	Shadowy	Duration
Continual flame	20 ft.	40 ft.	Permanent
Dancing lights (torches)	20 ft. (each)	40 ft. (each)	1 min.
Daylight	60 ft.	120 ft.	30 min.
Light	20 ft.	40 ft.	10 min.

[1] A candle doesn't provide bright illumination, only shadowy illumination.

[2] A bullseye lantern illuminates a cone, not a radius.

BRIGHT LIGHT

In an area of bright light, most creatures can see clearly. A creature can't hide in an area of bright light unless it is invisible, has concealment, or has cover.

SHADOWY ILLUMINATION

In an area of shadowy illumination, most creatures can see dimly. Creatures within this area have concealment against those who can see only dimly.

DARKNESS

In areas of darkness, creatures without senses that can overcome the darkness are effectively blinded.

DISTANT LIGHT

In open spaces, a light source can be spotted from much farther away than its radius of illumination. An observer who succeeds on a DC 20 Spot check sees the light from a distance as indicated below, and one who fails the Spot check automatically notices the light source at half that range.

Observer in Complete Darkness: A light source can be spotted at a distance equal to 20 times its radius of illumination.

Observer in Dim Light: A light source can be spotted at a distance equal to 10 times its radius of illumination.

Using Distant Illumination: Observers outside the illumination radius of a light source can see into the illumination just fine, making Spot checks as normal to discern creatures or objects in the illuminated area.

Illus. by M. Zug

Illus. by W. Reynolds

Line of Effect

Line of effect tells you whether an effect, such as an explosion, can reach a particular target. A line of effect is a straight, unblocked path that indicates what an ability, effect, or spell can affect. A solid barrier cancels line of effect. Fog, darkness, and other factors that limit normal sight don't block line of effect.

You must have line of effect to any target that you cast a spell on or to any space in which you wish to create an effect. You must have line of effect to the point of origin of any spell you cast, such as the center of a *fireball*. A burst, cone, cylinder, or emanation spell affects only an area, creatures, or objects to which it has line of effect from its origin—a spherical burst's center point, a cone-shaped burst's starting point, a cylinder's circle, or an emanation's point of origin.

An otherwise solid barrier with a hole of at least 1 square foot through it doesn't block a spell's line of effect. Such an opening means that the 5-foot length of wall containing the hole is no longer considered a barrier for the purpose of a spell's line of effect.

OUT OF SIGHT? NO PROBLEM!

Line of effect is a rules-y term that is related to the line of sight concept. If you can draw a straight line between the origin point of an effect (usually a spell) and the target square, then the effect can occur. This means that the effect, whether it's a magical effect or a ranged attack, can travel unimpeded from one point to another.

In many situations, line of effect is exactly like line of sight; however, there are exceptions. There's a list of effects, such as darkness, invisibility, blindness, and similar effects that interfere with line of sight without breaking line of effect. Knowing the difference between line of effect being blocked and line of sight being blocked can matter hugely in certain situations. For example, moving into darkness will hinder most ranged attackers by imposing a 50% miss chance even if they guess the correct square to aim at. However, it will do nothing to prevent a *fireball* from affecting you.

There is also a small set of effects, usually magical, such as *wall of force,* that impair line of effect but not line of sight. These effects can generally be described as transparent barriers—they are not a barrier to sight, but physical objects and magical energy cannot pass through them. Even a simple glass window can block line of effect but still allow line of sight, although of course it might be relatively simple to disable such a fragile barrier and restore line of effect.

One of the most important parts of understanding the line of effect rules, and therefore making correct decisions during combat encounters, is how to determine the point of origin of an effect. For ranged attacks and other effects that originate from a creature, the point of origin is any corner of any square that the creature occupies. For area effects, such as *fireball,* the line of effect originates from the corner of any square within the spell's range. One of the most important implications of this rule is that many creatures can use well-placed area spells and abilities to effectively reach foes hidden around corners or behind total cover, because the area defined by the effect traces line of effect from its point of origin rather than from the creature itself.

—Jesse Decker, D&D Development Manager

Line of Sight

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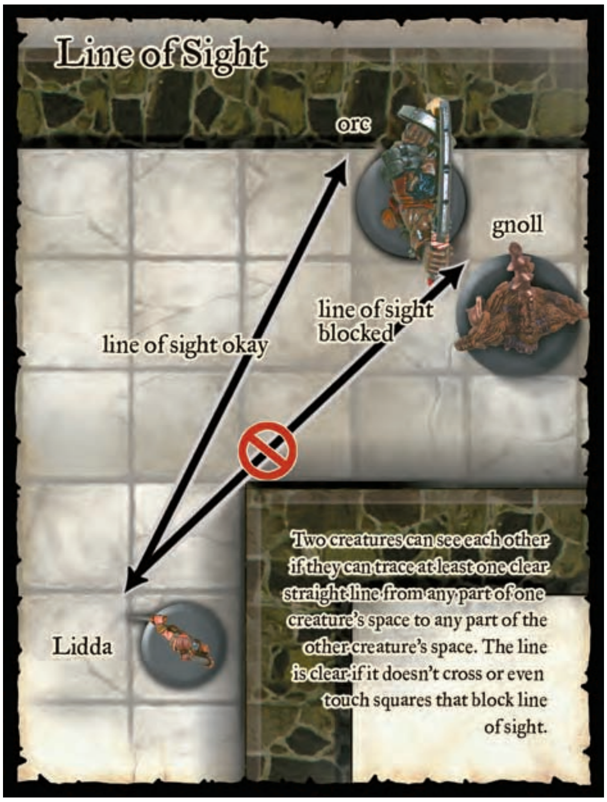
Line of sight establishes whether you can see something else represented on the battle grid. Presupposing you can see, determine line of sight by drawing an imaginary line between your space and the target's space. If any such line isn't blocked, then you have line of sight to the target, and if it's a creature, it has line of sight to you. The line isn't blocked if it doesn't intersect or even touch squares that block line of sight. If you have line of sight on a target, you can see to cast a targeted spell on it, shoot it with a bow, and so forth. If you can see a portion of a large creature that occupies more than one square, you can target that creature for a spell or any other attack.



Two creatures can see each other if they can trace at least one clear straight line from any part of one creature's space to any part of the other creature's space. The line is clear if it doesn't cross or even touch squares that block line of sight.

If you can't see the target, such as due to being blinded or the target's invisibility, you can't have line of sight to it even if you could draw an unblocked line between your space and the target's.

If line of sight to a target is completely blocked, you can't cast spells or use other abilities that require line of sight to the target. When line of sight is blocked by something that doesn't otherwise physically block or prevent an attack that doesn't require line of sight (such as fog), you can still make that attack, but your target is treated as if it were invisible (see page 76). If line of sight is partially blocked, such as by the corner of a building, attacks work normally, but the target's AC increases due to the cover.

WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET

Three rules that can easily save your character's life go hand-in-hand. The rules for line of sight, cover, and line of effect are all closely related, and using them well can make a huge difference in whether or not your character survives an encounter. All three of these rules are related to your character's position on the battlefield, and understanding them well can make the tactical decisions that you face during combat encounters more interesting. The first step, of course, is to be able to quickly and accurately determine lines of sight on the battlefield.

If two creatures can trace at least one clear straight line from any part of one creature's space to any part of the other creature's space, the creatures have line of sight to one another. Effects such as blindness, darkness, or invisibility naturally create conditions under which no line of sight is possible, even if you can find a clear line between the squares in question.

Although it's a straightforward exercise most of the time, line of sight issues can slow the game during some of the most exciting moments of play if you're not prepared. By far, the easiest way to resolve line of sight issues quickly and accurately is to simply carry a piece of string in your dice bag. Those zip-line key chains work great too, since they're extremely portable, easy to fish out of a dice bag, and usually cheap or free to acquire. Emphasizing your own speed and preparedness when dealing with these rules keeps the focus on the interesting decisions presented by the combat encounter, and away from the minutiae of the rules.

The goal, whether you're a player trying to preserve your character or a DM attempting to run intelligent monsters well, is to have clear lines of sight for your own ranged attacks while preventing your foes from targeting you or, at the least, gaining the defensive bonuses from cover. Mastering these rules makes combat run faster, and being able to quickly assess the advantageous positions on a battlefield leads to more movement and more interesting combats, no to mention taking less damage from many attacks.

—Jesse Decker, D&D Development Manager

Magic Items

Magic items are vitally important in the D&D game. This section discusses the rules needed to use them.

IDENTIFYING AN ITEM

When PCs find magic items as treasure, they need to determine what the items do. The following methods are available to identify magic items.

SKILLS

Certain skills allow a creature to identify an item.

Knowledge (Arcana)

A successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check means a creature learned of an item at one point during past studies. Such a success might give a hint to the item's function or reveal every detail about it. This method is most appropriate for legendary items or items that have a traditional shape associated with their function.

Search

Close study of an item might provide some information. A command word could be etched in tiny letters on the inside of a ring, or a feathered design might hint that an item allows its wearer to fly. In such a case, a successful DC 15 Search check reveals the clue.

Spellcraft

A creature using the *detect magic* spell can attempt a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + 1/2 the item's caster level) to determine the school (or schools) of the highest-level spell (or spells) involved in the item's creation, as well as the strength of the item's aura (faint to overwhelming, based on its caster level). If the creature exceeds the DC for this check by 10 or more, that creature magically divines the item's functions, its means of activation, and the number of charges remaining.

A creature can also use Spellcraft to identify potions. The DC is 25, the check takes 1 minute, and it can't be retried on a failure.

Use Magic Device

If a creature succeeds on a Use Magic Device check to activate a magic item and exceeds the DC by 5 or more, that creature magically divines the item's functions, its means of activation, and the number of charges remaining.

BARDIC KNOWLEDGE

Although not quite as useful as the skills discussed above, a successful bardic knowledge check might reveal the backgrounds, functions, and means of activating legendary or otherwise well-known items. If the item is standard equipment for a well-known faction or person, the DC is 20. If the item is uncommon or ancient, but many items like it are in circulation, the DC is 25. If the item is known only in legend, the DC is 30 or higher. A successful result should reveal something of the item's history and give at least a hint about the item's function.

SPELLS

Spells are the most reliable way to identify items.

Detect Magic

The easiest way for creatures to discern whether an object is magical is to use *detect magic*. The process for this is covered above in the Spellcraft skill option for identifying a magic item.

Identify

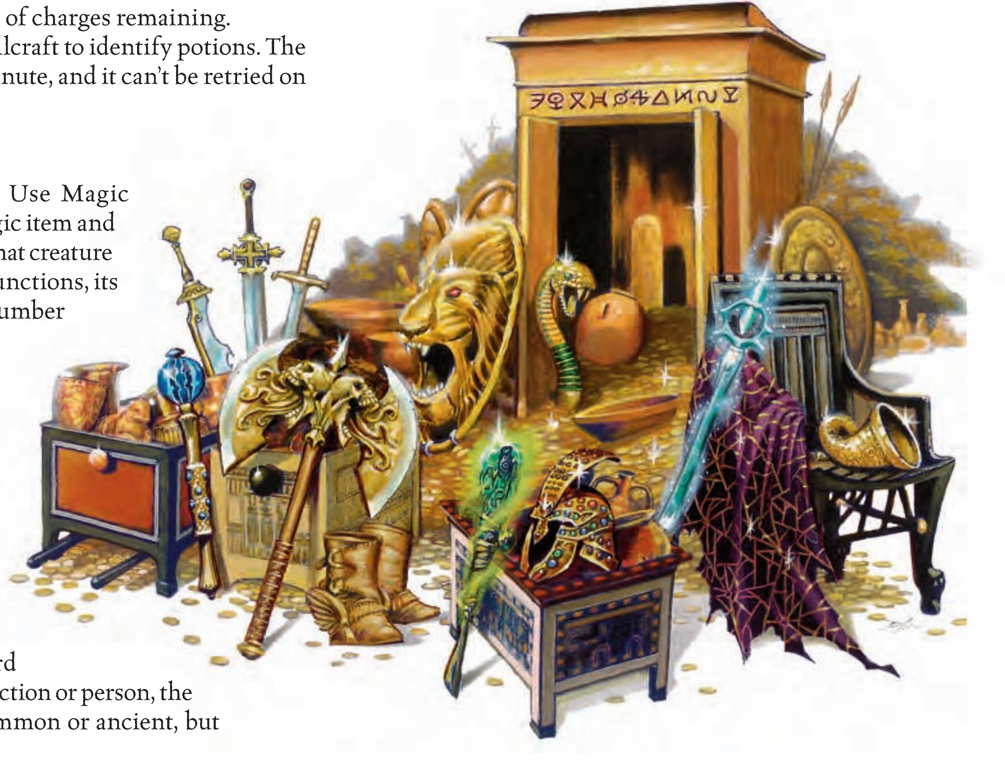
The *identify* spell (*PH* 243) determines the functions, means of activation, and number of charges remaining for any item of less than artifact power. It takes an hour to cast and has an expensive material component, but it's also a sure way to identify most magic items.

Analyze Dweomer

The *analyze dweomer* spell (*PH* 197) functions like *identify*, but its casting time is shorter, it has a focus rather than an expensive material component, and the caster can determine the properties of several items with one casting of the spell. This spell is the swiftest and surest way to identify many magic items.

HIRED HELP

The PCs might want to consult bards, sages, or high-level spellcasters to identify items. Such NPCs might also know some details or rumors about an item's history. They always want something in return for this information, and they



Illus. by D. Martin

charge standard prices for spells they cast (see page 69). If an NPC can identify the item without using spells, that character might still ask for payment equivalent to the cost of casting *identify* (100 gp + 10 gp per level). Of course, an NPC might instead demand some service or trade.

DM EXPLANATION

It might be simpler for the DM to tell the players what an item is. This approach is particularly useful when the item provides a bonus that must be tracked on actions the PC is already taking.

TRIAL AND ERROR

The trial-and-error process usually entails a PC attempting to use the item. As long as everyone finds this to be a fun method, it's fine. If, however, the players turn it into a tedious checklist of tests, it's reasonable for the DM to rule that until a creature has determined a magic item's powers, command word, or other secrets in one of the manners noted above, no amount of crazy experimentation helps.

USING AN ITEM

When a creature wants to use a magic item that has already been identified, the first consideration is whether that creature can use the item at all. To do so, the creature must usually have available body slots and be of appropriate size and shape. The second consideration is the item's method of activation.

BODY SLOTS

A normal humanoid creature has twelve body slots, enumerated here with some examples of the kinds of items that might be worn there (for nonhumanoid creatures, see Size and Shape on the next page).

Arms: Armbands, bracelets, bracers.

Body: Armor, robes.

Face: Goggles, lenses, masks, spectacles, third eyes.

Feet: Boots, sandals, shoes, slippers.

Hands: Gauntlets, gloves.

Head: Circlets, crowns, hats, headbands, helmets, phylacteries.

Rings (2 slots): Rings.

Shoulders: Capes, cloaks, mantles, shawls.

Throat: Amulets, badges, brooches, collars, medals, medallions, necklaces, pendants, periapts, scarabs, scarfs, torcs.

Torso: Shirts, tunics, vests, vestments.

Waist: Belts, girdles, sashes.

Each body slot can accommodate only a single active magic item. Additional magic items could be worn in the same body slot, but only the first-worn item confers its magical abilities upon the wearer.

Some body slots are described as a matched pair of body parts. If an item uses one of these body slots, it takes up both "halves" of the body slot even if worn on only one of the pair. For example, a *glove of storing* takes up the entire hands body slot, even though it's only one glove. Similarly, items that come in pairs must be worn together to function.

Some items—particularly those that have a limited number of uses per day—indicate that they must be worn for a certain length of time before they can be used. This attunement period prevents creatures from treating them as disposable tools to be donned and stowed repeatedly throughout the day.

NONWORN MAGIC ITEMS

Some magic items aren't worn on the body, but are instead carried or held by the owner to gain their benefit. Such items function or can be activated as long as they're carried somewhere on the body—but not if stored in an extradimensional or nondimensional storage space, such as a *bag of holding*. An item's description might delineate a particular manner in which you must carry it for it to function (such as an *ioun stone*).

SIZE AND SHAPE

Most creatures have all the normal body slots available. Creatures never gain extra body slots for having extra body parts. For unusual cases, here are some guidelines.

Armor

As long as you're the same size category and the same general shape as the armor's original owner, the armor functions normally for you. However, inappropriately sized or shaped armor can't be worn. Armor doesn't resize to fit a wearer of a different size category, nor does armor constructed for a humanoid-shaped creature fit a nonhumanoid-shaped creature. In cases where a nonhumanoid-shaped creature

A WAND BY ANY OTHER NAME

Potions, scrolls, wands, and staffs offer little room for differentiating items by appearance. As a result, they can seem generic or pedestrian.

For a change of pace, reinvent these items in new shapes and sizes. Just boil the function down to its most basic state, then imagine other forms that could accomplish that function.

A potion or scroll is basically just a one-shot spell, but it need not always be liquid in a vial or words on a page. Magically altered fruit, herbal infusions, or atomizers can deliver the same effect as a potion but with a new feel. Breaking a runic tile or touching an elaborate tattoo to activate its one "dose" of power doesn't feel like reading a piece of parchment, but the end result is pretty much the same.

A wand could take the form of an orb, a rune-crusted skull, or even a weapon. That staff could become a tome with a few spells within, or a musical instrument requiring a certain chord for each of its spells.

These variations can, but don't have to, include minor changes in rules as well. For example, maybe that *lyre of frost* requires its user to have a rank of Perform (string instruments) in order for it to function.

It's easy to overwhelm players with variety, so don't just change everything in one fell swoop. Introduce one or two new item shapes in your game and see if the players enjoy trying them out, then slowly expand the range of options and rule variations.

—Andy Collins, developer

tries to wear armor created for another nonhumanoid, the DM should use his best judgment.

Shields

Shields don't change size to match the wielder. You can't use an inappropriately sized shield.

Weapons

Weapons don't change size to match the wielder. You can wield an inappropriately sized weapon with a penalty (see Inappropriately Sized Weapons, page 151). Regardless of a weapon's size, as long as you can hold a weapon you can activate its magical abilities.

Nonhumanoid Creatures

Creatures that lack any clear shape have no body slots and can't wear magic items at all.

Armless Creatures: Creatures that have no forelimbs don't have the arms, hands, or rings body slot—but see Multilegged Creatures, below. A creature that has only a single forelimb retains these body slots and can wear both items of a pair on the same limb.

Fingerless Creatures: Creatures that lack flexible digits or extremities lack the rings body slot. A creature need not be able to manipulate objects to wear rings.

Headless Creatures: Creatures that do not have an identifiable head lack the face, head, and throat body slots.

Legless Creatures: Creatures that have no hind limbs don't have the feet body slot.

Multilegged Creatures: Creatures that have more than two legs can treat their foremost pair of limbs as their arms, allowing them access to the arms, hands, and rings body slots, even if those limbs are used for locomotion rather than for manipulation. Creatures that have arms as well as multiple legs lack no body slots.

ACTIVATING MAGIC ITEMS

Some items, once donned, function continuously. Others apply their properties or powers when used as part of another action. In many cases, using an item requires it to be activated with an action of some kind.

You can't activate an item that you don't properly possess, hold, or wear. Some items merely require that you carry them on your person but not specifically worn in a slot or carried in a hand. Some magic items store metamagic spells. You don't need the metamagic feat to activate an item storing a metamagic version of a spell.

Activation methods are delineated here, but the details of a particular item's description supersede these general rules. If no activation method is given either in the item's description or by the nature of the item, assume that a command word is needed to activate it.

Command

Command activation means that a user speaks a command word and the item activates. No other special knowledge is needed. The command word can be a real word, but when this is the case, the user runs the risk of activating the item accidentally by speaking the word in normal conversation. More often, the command word is a nonsensical word, or a word or phrase from a language no longer in common use. A user can't activate a command item in the area of a *silence* spell or if unable to speak.

Activating a command item takes the same amount of time as the casting time of the spell that the item's power duplicates. If the power doesn't duplicate a spell, activating the item is a standard action unless its description says otherwise. Command activation doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Continuously Functioning

Continuously functioning items are usually items that a creature wears. A few must simply be carried, while others are tools or weapons that provide an enhancement bonus on certain checks or rolls. Such items don't need to be activated. It takes at least a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity to don an item of this sort, but it might take longer, such as with magic armor.

Manipulation

Activating this type of item requires some physical manipulation of it, such as placing an *immovable rod* or pulling a patch from a *robe of useful items*. This movement is similar to the somatic component of a spell in that you need a free hand to perform the manipulation.

Most manipulation items require a standard action to manipulate, but an item's description might indicate another type of action. Activating a manipulation item as a move action, a standard action, or a full-round action provokes attacks of opportunity. A successful attack or grapple check against the user of such an item forces a Concentration check. If the user fails this check, he can't use the item.

Oils and Potions: Any corporeal creature can use a potion or an oil, both of which are manipulation items that take a standard action to use. A creature can carefully administer a potion to an unconscious creature as a full-round action, trickling the liquid down the creature's throat. It takes a full-round action to apply an oil to an unconscious creature.

Mental

This type of item merely requires that the user will it to function, so activating the item is a purely mental act. A user can activate the item in the area of a *silence* spell, while grappled, while paralyzed, and so on, as long he has control of his thoughts. A user can't use a mentally activated item if dominated, unconscious, sleeping, turned to stone, or otherwise incapable of conscious independent thought. However, someone dominating a user could make that user use a mentally activated item or give the user free rein to use it within the bounds of other instructions.

Activating a mental activation item takes the same amount of time as the casting time of the spell that the item's power duplicates. If the power doesn't duplicate a spell, activating the item is a standard action unless its description says otherwise. Mental activation doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Spell Completion

This is the activation method for scrolls. A scroll is a spell or collection of spells that has been stored, mostly finished, in written form. All that's left to do is perform the finishing parts of the spellcasting. Using a scroll properly involves several steps and conditions.

Decipher: The writing on a scroll must be deciphered before someone can use it or know exactly what spell it contains. Doing this requires a *read magic* spell or a successful Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level). Deciphering a scroll to determine its contents doesn't activate it unless it's a specially prepared cursed scroll. A creature can decipher the writing on a scroll in advance.

Activate: Activating a scroll requires reading the spell from the scroll. The user must be able to see and read the writing on the scroll. Using a scroll's spell requires no material components or focus, and its caster level is set, but the user determines the specifics of the effect. Activating a scroll takes the same amount of time as the casting time of the spell stored on the scroll and provokes attacks of opportunity as spellcasting does. Concentration is required, and activating a scroll is subject to disruption just as casting a spell is. Using a scroll is like casting a spell for the purpose of arcane spell failure. A user can't activate a scroll if he would be prevented from casting the spell it contains, such as casting a spell that has verbal components in the area of a *silence* spell.

Activation Requirements: To have any chance of activating a scroll, the user must meet the following requirements.

- The spell must be of the correct type—arcane or divine. Arcane spellcasters can use only scrolls that contain arcane spells, and divine spellcasters can use only scrolls that contain divine spells.
- The user must have the spell on his class list.
- The user must have the requisite ability score.

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If the user meets all the requirements, and his caster level is at least equal to the spell's caster level, he can activate the spell without a check. If he meets all three requirements but his caster level is lower than the scroll spell's caster level, he must succeed on a caster level check (see Caster Level Checks, page 31; DC = scroll's caster level + 1) to activate the scroll. If he fails, he must succeed on a DC 5 Wisdom check to avoid a mishap (see below). Unlike with normal checks, a natural roll of 1 always fails, whatever the modifiers. If the Wisdom check succeeds, the scroll doesn't activate but remains intact.

Effect: A spell successfully activated from a scroll works exactly like a spell cast the normal way. If the scroll spell's caster level is unknown, assume the caster level is the minimum level required to cast the spell for the creature that scribed the scroll (usually twice the spell's level, –1).

A spell on a scroll can be used only once. The writing vanishes from the scroll when the spell is activated.

Mishap: When a mishap occurs, the spell on the scroll is wasted and has a harmful effect determined by the DM. Possible mishaps are given here.

- A surge of uncontrolled magical energy deals 1d6 points of damage per spell level to the user.
- The spell strikes the user or an ally instead of the intended target, or a random target nearby if the user was the intended recipient.
- The spell takes effect at some random location within spell range.
- The spell's effect on the target is contrary to the spell's normal effect.
- The scroll user suffers some minor but bizarre effect related to the spell in some way. Most such effects should last only as long as the original spell's duration, or 2d10 minutes for instantaneous spells.
- Some innocuous items appear in the spell's area.
- The spell has a delayed effect. Sometime within the next 1d12 hours, the spell activates. If the scroll user was the intended recipient, the spell takes effect normally. If the user wasn't the intended recipient, the spell goes off in the general direction of the original recipient or target, up to the spell's maximum range, if the target has moved away.

Spell Trigger

To use a spell trigger item, the user must first know what spell the item stores (unless he is activating the item blindly using Use Magic Device). Activating the item requires the user to have the spell stored in the item on his spell list and to speak a word. Even a character who can't cast the spell stored in the item can use it from a spell trigger item as long as that spell is on his spell list. This is the case even for a member of a class that eventually grants spells but who can't actually cast spells yet, such as a 3rd-level paladin. A domain spell is on a user's spell list only if the user has access to that domain.

Activating a spell trigger item takes the same amount of time as the casting time of the spell that the item stores, but activating the item doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. You can't activate a spell trigger item in the area of a *silence* spell or if unable to speak.

Staffs and Wands: To activate a staff or wand, the user must hold the item toward the target or area in a hand or similar appendage. A wand can be used while the user is grappling, but a staff can't.

Staffs use the wielder's relevant ability score and relevant feats to set the DC for saves against their spells. Unlike with other sorts of magic items, the wielder can use his caster level when activating a staff if that caster level is higher than the staff's. He can also use Spell Penetration and Greater Spell Penetration to overcome spell resistance when using spells cast from a staff.

LIMITED USES

Not all magic items allow unlimited use of their powers.

Charged and Single-Use

Some items have a limited number of uses or charges before their powers are permanently depleted. Others function only a single time. After you use up the last charge or use of one of these items, it becomes a nonmagical object. Partially depleted charged items can't be recharged.

Daily-Use Items

Many magic items have a limited number of uses per day. When the last of these uses is used, that power is no longer available for the day, but the item is still magical and might have other powers available. Unless otherwise noted in an item's description, any item that has daily uses regains all those uses at dawn each day.

USE MAGIC DEVICE (CHA, TRAINED ONLY)

If you're trained in this skill, you can use it to read spells and activate magic items as if you had the spell ability or class features of another class, as if you were a different race, or as if you were of a different alignment. You make a Use Magic Device check each time you activate a magic item as part of the action required to activate that item. If you're using the check to emulate an alignment or some other quality in an ongoing manner, you need to make the relevant Use Magic Device check once per hour.

You can't take 10 with this skill. Nobody else can use aid another to help you. If you ever roll a natural 1 while attempting to activate an item and you fail, then you can't try to activate that item again for 24 hours. You can otherwise try to activate an item as often as you like.

If emulating an attribute, you must consciously choose which requirement to emulate. That is, you must know what you're trying to emulate when you make a Use Magic Device check for that purpose. The DCs for various tasks involving Use Magic Device checks are summarized on the following table.

USE MAGIC DEVICE

Task	DC
Activate blindly	25
Decipher written spell	25 + spell level
Emulate ability score	15 + ability score
Emulate class feature	20
Emulate race	25
Emulate alignment	30
Use scroll	20 + caster level
Use wand	20

Activate Blindly

Some magic items are activated by special words, thoughts, or deeds. You can activate such an item as if you were using the activation word, thought, or deed, even when you're not and even if you don't know exactly what to do. You do have to perform some equivalent activity to make the check. You get a special +2 bonus on your Use Magic Device check if you've activated the item in question at least once before. If you fail by 9 or less, you can't activate the device. If you fail by 10 or more, you suffer a mishap.

A mishap means that magical energy gets released but it doesn't do what you wanted it to do. The default mishaps are that the item affects the wrong target or that uncontrolled magical energy is released, dealing 2d6 points of damage to you. This mishap is in addition to the chance for a mishap that you normally run when you cast a spell from a scroll that you couldn't otherwise cast yourself.

Decipher Written Spell

This works just like deciphering a written spell with the Spellcraft skill, except that the DC is 5 points higher. Deciphering a written spell requires 1 minute of concentration.

Emulate Ability Score

To cast a spell from a scroll, you need a high score in the appropriate ability (Intelligence for wizard spells, Wisdom for divine spells, or Charisma for sorcerer or bard spells). Your effective ability score, appropriate to the class you're emulating when you try to cast the spell from the scroll, is your Use Magic Device check result –15. If you already have a high enough score in the appropriate ability, you don't need to make this check.

Emulate Alignment

Some magic items have positive or negative effects based on the user's alignment. Use Magic Device lets you use these items as if you were of an alignment of your choice. You can emulate only one alignment at a time.

Emulate Class Feature

Sometimes you need to use a class feature to activate a magic item. In this case, your effective level in the emulated class equals your Use Magic Device check result –20. This skill doesn't let you actually use the class feature of another class. It just lets you activate items as if you had that class feature. If the class whose feature you're emulating has an alignment requirement, you must meet it, either honestly or by emulating an appropriate alignment with a separate Use Magic Device check.

You can use the skill in this way to make a caster level check with an item. Your effective caster level is your check result –20. See Caster Level Checks, page 31.

Emulate Race

Some magic items work only for members of certain races, or work better for members of those races. You can use such an item as if you were a race of your choice. You can emulate only one race at a time.

Use Scroll

If you're casting a spell from a scroll, you have to decipher it first. Normally, to cast a spell from a scroll, you must have the scroll's spell on your class spell list. Use Magic Device allows you to use a scroll as if you had a particular spell on your class spell list. The DC is equal to 20 + the caster level of the spell you're trying to cast from the scroll. In addition, casting a spell from a scroll requires a minimum score (10 + spell level) in the appropriate ability score. If you don't have a sufficient score in that ability, you must emulate the ability score with a separate Use Magic Device check. Using a scroll still has a mishap chance as normal. This use of the skill also applies to other spell completion magic items.

Use Wand

Normally, to use a wand, you must have the wand's spell on your class spell list. This use of the skill allows you to use a wand as if you had a particular spell on your class spell list. Using the skill in this way also applies to other spell trigger magic items, such as staffs.

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RESOLVING MAGIC ITEM EFFECTS

A magic item's description either specifically details its effect when activated or refers you to a particular spell, power, class feature, or other entry to learn the effect. The item's description always supersedes the spell, power, class feature, or other source that the item mimics. Don't assume that just because a spell is a prerequisite that the item necessarily replicates that spell—in many cases, the spell is simply the closest reasonable effect to the item's power.

Caster Level

Each item's description indicates a caster level. This caster level is used to determine the parameters of a spell that the item duplicates, such as range, duration, and so on. It's also used to determine DCs for spells such as *dispel magic*.

If an item doesn't mention a caster level, assume the caster level is equal to the minimum caster level required for the highest-level spell given as a prerequisite for the item. For an item that has only an enhancement bonus and no other properties, the caster level is three times the enhancement bonus.

Save DCs

Most item descriptions indicate the save DC for the item's powers. In cases where the save DC isn't given, the DC is 10 + (1-1/2 × the level of the spell or effect). This assumes that the item has the minimum ability score required to cast the spell. Staffs and runestaffs (*Magic Item Compendium* 223) are exceptions to this rule. Treat the saving throw DCs for these items as if the user had cast the spell, including caster level and all modifiers to the save DC.

Stacking Effects

Item effects stack just as spells do (see Stacking Effects, page 137).

Mounted Combat

Riding a mount into battle gives you several advantages.

RIDE (DEX)

You can ride many creatures that are suitable as mounts. If you attempt to ride a creature that is ill suited as a mount, you take a –5 penalty on your Ride checks. Riding a mount without a saddle also imposes a –5 penalty on your Ride checks. Typical riding maneuvers don't require checks. You can saddle, mount, ride, and dismount from a mount without a problem. The table below shows common tasks, their DCs, and the time it takes to perform them.

Ride

Task	DC
No Action	
Cover	15
Enter water	10
Guide with knees	5
Leap	15
Soft fall	15
Stay in saddle	5
Swim while mounted	See text
Free Action	
Fast mount or dismount	20[1]
Fight as war mount attacks	10
Move Action	
Control nonwar mount in battle	20
Spur mount	15

[1] Armor check penalty applies.

NO ACTION

These riding tasks don't require an action to perform.

Cover

You can drop down and hang alongside your mount, using it as cover. Make the Ride check before the opponent makes its attack roll. If multiple opponents are attacking on the same initiative count, make one Ride check to see if you have cover from all those opponents' attacks.

You can't claim this sort of cover while attacking, casting spells, or charging, and you can't attack, cast spells, or charge while using your mount as cover. If you fail, you don't get the benefit of cover.

Enter Water

Failure on a Ride check to enter the water on a land mount means the mount refuses to enter the water. If you fail by 5 or more, the land mount balks, throwing you into the water while it stays ashore. If you're riding an aquatic mount, failure means you take a –5 penalty on your next Ride check to stay astride the swimming mount. Failure by 5 or more means you're unsaddled as your mount enters the water.

Guide with Knees

You can guide your mount with your knees so that you can use both hands in combat. Make your Ride check at the start of your turn. If you fail, you can use only one hand in this round because you need to use the other to control your mount.

Leap

You can get your mount to leap obstacles as part of its movement. Use your Ride modifier or the mount's Jump modifier, whichever is lower, to see how far the creature can jump. If you fail, you fall off the mount when it leaps and take the appropriate falling damage (at least 1d6 points).

Soft Fall

You can try to take no damage when you fall off a mount. If you fail, you take 1d6 points of damage from the fall.

Stay in Saddle

You can try to avoid falling when your mount rears or bolts unexpectedly, or when you take damage.

Swim while Mounted

Each round your mount swims, make a Ride check to stay mounted. The DC is 10 for calm water, 15 for rough water or underwater, and 20 for stormy water. If you fail, your mount swims at half speed and takes a –5 penalty on Swim checks until you succeed on another Ride check. If you fail by 5 or more, you're unsaddled. Getting mounted again requires a successful Swim check at the appropriate DC for the water and Ride check at that same DC.

FREE ACTION

These riding tasks require a free action to perform.

Fast Mount or Dismount

You can attempt to quickly mount or dismount from a mount up to one size category larger than yourself, provided that you still have a move action available that round. If you fail, mounting or dismounting is a move action.

MOUNTED MATTERS

During an early 3e playtest of the Forgotten Realms adventure *Into the Dragon's Lair,* I played a 10th-level paladin with the Mounted Combat and Spirited Charge feats. The beginning part of the adventure provides for plenty of outdoor travel and exploration, so I was able to make good use of my warhorse. While exploring the Stormhorn Mountains, we ran into a blue dragon that attacked Skip Williams's wizard and mauled him severely. Naturally, I spurred my warhorse in a glorious charge and attacked! I rolled a 20 and confirmed the critical hit—so, with my Spirited Charge feat, I wound up scoring triple damage. I distinctly recall dishing out 63 points of damage to the dragon in one mighty blow. That dragon abruptly lost interest in Skip's wizard and abandoned the field, never to trouble us again.

—Rich Baker, designer

Fight as War Mount Attacks

If you direct your war-trained mount to attack in battle, you can still make your attacks normally.

MOVE ACTION

These riding tasks require a move action to perform.

Spur Mount

You can spur your mount to greater speed. A successful Ride check increases the mount's speed by 10 feet for 1 round but deals 1 point of damage to the creature. You can use this ability every round, but each consecutive round of additional speed deals twice as much damage to the mount as the previous round.

Control Nonwar Mount in Battle

You can attempt to control a mount not trained for combat while riding it in battle. If you fail, the move action becomes a full-round action, and you can't do anything else until your next turn.

COMBAT WHILE MOUNTED

Your mount acts on your initiative count as you direct it. The mount uses its action to move, and you move along with it. When you're mounted, you share your mount's space completely. Multiple riders share their mount's space completely as well.

CASTING SPELLS

You can cast a spell normally if your mount moves only its speed or less either before or after you cast. If you have your mount double move, it's moving both before and after you cast. You're then casting the spell while the mount is moving, and you have to make a Concentration check due to the vigorous motion (DC 10 + spell level) or lose the spell. If you have your mount run, you cast when it has moved up to twice its speed, but your Concentration check is more difficult due to the violent motion (DC 15 + spell level).

CHARGING

If your mount charges, you also take the AC penalty associated with a charge. If you make an attack at the end of the charge, you receive the bonus gained from the charge.

HIGHER GROUND

When you attack a creature that is on foot and smaller than your mount, you receive a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls for being on higher ground. You receive the same bonus if the DM determines you're higher than your target for some other reason.

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MOVING

If your mount moves more than 5 feet, you can make only a single melee attack. Essentially, you have to wait until the mount gets to your enemy before attacking, so you can't make a full attack. Even at your mount's full speed, you don't take any penalty on melee attacks while mounted.

You can take your own move actions normally, so that, for instance, you can load and fire a light crossbow during a round while your mount is moving.

RIDER UNCONSCIOUS

If you're knocked unconscious, you have a 50% chance to stay in the saddle (75% if you're in a military saddle). Otherwise you fall and take 1d6 points of damage. Without you to guide it, your mount avoids combat.

OVERRUN

If you attempt an overrun while mounted, your mount makes the Strength check to determine the success or failure of the overrun, and it applies its size modifier rather than yours. If you knock the defender prone with the overrun, your mount can make a single attack against that creature. The attack must be made with a natural weapon that is on the mount's front feet, and it can't be a special attack. If the mount has no natural weapons on its feet, it can't make this sort of attack during an overrun.

SHOOTING

If your mount moves only its speed or less, you take no penalty on ranged attack rolls. You can use ranged weapons while your mount is taking a double move, but with a –4 penalty on attack rolls. If your mount is running, you take a –8 penalty instead. In either of these latter two cases, you make the attack rolls when your mount has completed half its movement, measuring range from that point. You can make a full attack with a ranged weapon while your mount is moving.

Movement

Movement during battle, exploration, and travel is an essential part of the D&D game. Where you can move, how long it takes you to get there, and whether you're vulnerable to attacks of opportunity while you're moving are key questions during combat.

ON THE GRID

During combat, movement occurs on the battle grid. A square on the battle grid is 1 inch across, representing a 5-foot-by-5-foot area. Miniatures or other tokens are used to represent and track creatures as they move.

SPEED

Your speed is determined by your race and your encumbrance. Your speed while unarmored is your base land speed.

Encumbrance

A creature encumbered by carrying a large amount of weight might move slower than normal. See Encumbrance, page 47.

Bonuses to Speed

Always apply any modifiers to a creature's speed before adjusting that creature's speed based on armor or encumbrance. Multiple bonuses of the same type to a creature's speed don't stack.

MOVEMENT MODES

You can move your speed as a move action during your turn and still take a standard action. You can use your standard action to move your speed again. In either case, you're considered to be hustling—if you walk, it takes a full-round action just to move your speed. When you're moving, you might choose to run, or you might take part or all of your movement in some other mode. Your options are described in this section.

5-Foot Step

As long as your movement isn't hampered or prohibited, you can move 5 feet during a turn when you don't take any other kind of movement. If you can take a 5-foot step, you can take it before, during, or after your other actions during your turn. Taking this 5-foot step never provokes attacks of opportunity.

You can't take more than one 5-foot step in a round. Any creature that has a speed of 5 feet or lower can't take a 5-foot step, since moving even 5 feet requires a move action for such a slow creature. You can't take a 5-foot step using a movement mode for which you don't have a natural speed. A natural speed is given in a race's or creature's description with a noted amount of movement.

Balance (Dex; Armor Check Penalty)

A successful Balance check lets you use a move action to move up to half your speed along a precarious surface. If you accept a –5 penalty, you can move your full speed as a move action. You can try to run across a narrow surface by accepting a –20 penalty on your Balance check. On a narrow surface or a difficult surface, a failure by 4 or less means you can't move for 1 round. A failure by 5 or more means you fall. The DC of the Balance check varies with the surface, as detailed on the following table.

BALANCE

Narrow Surface	DC
7–12 inches wide	10
2–6 inches wide	15
Less than 2 inches wide	20

Difficult Surface	DC
Uneven flagstone	10[1]
Hewn stone floor	10[1]
Sloped or angled floor	10[2]
Moving surface	10
Violently moving surface	15

Surface Modifiers	DC Modifier[3]
Lightly obstructed (scree, light debris)	+2
Severely obstructed (natural cavern floor, heavy debris)	+5
Lightly slippery (wet floor)	+2
Severely slippery (ice sheet)	+5
Sloped or angled	+2

1 Only if running or charging. Failure by 4 or less means the creature can't run or charge, but can otherwise act normally.
2 As note 2, except the modifier for a sloped or angled surface does not apply.
3 These modifiers stack.

Being Attacked while Balancing: You're considered flat-footed while balancing. If you have 5 or more ranks in Balance, you aren't considered flat-footed while balancing. If you take damage while balancing, you must succeed on another Balance check against the same DC or fall prone.

Burrow

A creature that has a natural burrow speed can tunnel at its noted speed through dirt, but not through rock unless its descriptive text says otherwise. Creatures can't charge or run while burrowing. Most burrowing creatures don't leave behind tunnels other creatures can use, either because the material they tunnel through fills in behind them or because they don't actually dislocate any material when burrowing.

Creatures that don't have a natural burrow speed can't burrow at all.

Climb (Str; Armor Check Penalty)

If you don't have a natural climb speed, you can use a move action to climb at up to one-quarter of your speed by making an appropriate Climb check. With a successful Climb check, you can advance up, down, or across a slope, a wall, or some other steep incline. A slope is considered to be any incline at an angle measuring less than 60 degrees; a wall is any incline at an angle measuring 60 degrees or more. A Climb check that fails by 4 or less means that you make no progress, and one that fails by 5 or more means that you fall from whatever height you have already attained.

The DC of the check depends on the conditions of the climb. Compare the task with those on the following table to determine an appropriate DC.

Climb

Example Surface or Activity	DC
A slope too steep to walk up, or a knotted rope with a wall to brace against	0
A rope with a wall to brace against, or a knotted rope, or a rope affected by the *rope trick* spell	5
A surface with ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a very rough wall or a ship's rigging	10
Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a very rough natural rock surface or a tree, or an unknotted rope, or pulling yourself up when dangling by your hands	15
An uneven surface with some narrow handholds and footholds, such as a typical wall in a dungeon or ruin	20
A rough surface, such as a natural rock wall or a brick wall	25
An overhang or ceiling with handholds but no footholds	25
A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface	—

Example Surface or Activity	DC Modifier[1]
Climbing a chimney (artificial or natural) or other location where you can brace against opposite walls	–10
Climbing a corner where you can brace against a perpendicular wall	–5
Climbing at half speed instead of one-quarter speed	+5
Climbing at normal speed	+20
Climbing while retaining Dexterity bonus to AC	+20
Surface is slippery	+5

[1] These modifiers stack.

Taking Other Actions while Climbing: You need both hands free to climb, but you can cling to a wall with one hand while you cast a spell or perform some other act that requires only one hand.

Being Attacked while Climbing: While climbing, you can't move to avoid a blow, so you're denied your Dexterity bonus to AC. You also can't use a shield. Any time you take damage while climbing, make a Climb check against the DC of the slope or wall. Failure means you fall from your current height and sustain the appropriate falling damage (see page 52).

Making Handholds and Footholds: You can make handholds and footholds by pounding pitons into a wall. Doing so takes 1 minute per piton, and one piton is needed per 3 feet of distance. In the same way, a climber with a handaxe or similar tool can cut handholds in an ice wall.

Rappelling: You can use a rope and climbing gear to make a rapid descent while climbing. You must have a climber's kit, rope, and at least 1 rank in Climb. While rappelling, you can descend at your base land speed down a wall of any surface type with a DC 10 Climb check, or you can take a full-round action to move twice your speed. You can take a full-round action to descend at four times your speed by making a DC 20 Climb check. You take normal DC modifiers for a slippery wall and trying to retain your Dexterity bonus to AC, and the DC increases by 10 if you have no wall to brace against.

If you fail, you descend at the rate you intended, but take 1d6 points of damage. If you fail by 5 or more, you descend so rapidly you're considered to be falling. If you manage to catch yourself while falling in this way, you still take 1d6 points of damage. If you rappel off the end of a rope, you fall.

Catching Yourself while Falling: Make a Climb check (DC = wall's DC + 20) to catch yourself while falling. It's much easier to catch yourself on a slope (DC = slope's DC + 10) or while rappelling (DC = DC to rappel + 10).

Catching a Falling Creature while Climbing: If a creature climbing above you or adjacent to you falls, you can attempt to catch that creature if it's within your reach. Doing so requires a successful melee touch attack against the falling creature, who can voluntarily forego any Dexterity bonus to AC. If you hit, you must immediately attempt a Climb check (DC = wall's DC + 10). Success indicates that you catch the falling creature, but its total weight, including equipment, can't exceed your maximum load (see Encumbrance, page 47) or you automatically fall. If you fail your Climb check by 4 or less, you fail to stop the creature's fall but don't lose your grip on the wall. If you fail by 5 or more, you fail to stop the creature's fall and begin falling as well.

Natural Climb Speed: A creature that has a natural climb speed moves at the noted speed while climbing. It has a +8 racial bonus on all Climb checks. The creature must succeed on a Climb check to climb any wall or slope that has a DC higher than 0, but it can choose to take 10, even if distracted or threatened. If the creature chooses an accelerated climb, it moves at double the given climb speed or its base land speed, whichever is lower, and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty. Creatures can't run while climbing. A creature that has a climb speed retains its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class while climbing, and opponents get no special bonus on their attacks against it.

Crawl

You can crawl 5 feet as a move action. You can't take a 5-foot step, because your speed is effectively 5 feet. Crawling provokes attacks of opportunity.

If a creature, such as a snake, uses no limbs to move its land speed, that creature can crawl at its normal speed, provoking attacks of opportunity as it would for regular movement.

Fly

A creature that has a natural fly speed can move through the air at the noted speed. All fly speeds include a parenthetical note indicating maneuverability (see Maneuverability). A creature can run while flying in a straight line (see Run, page 93).

Most creatures can't fly if carrying a medium or heavy load. A creature's description takes precedence over these general rules.

Maneuverability: Each flying creature has a maneuverability that defines how good it is at turning and changing direction in the air. The following table defines the capabilities a creature has at a particular maneuverability.

MANEUVERABILITY

	Maneuverability				
	Perfect	Good	Average	Poor	Clumsy
Minimum forward speed	None	None	Half	Half	Half
Hover	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Move backward	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Reverse	Free	–5 ft.	No	No	No
Turn	Any	90°/ 5 ft.	45°/ 5 ft.	45°/ 5 ft.	45°/ 10 ft.
Turn in place	Any	+90°/ –5 ft.	+45°/ –5 ft.	No	No
Maximum turn	Any	Any	90°	45°	45°
Up angle	Any	Any	60°	45°	45°
Up speed	Full	× 1/2	× 1/2	× 1/2	× 1/2
Down angle	Any	Any	Any	45°	45°
Down speed	× 2	× 2	× 2	× 2	× 2
Between down and up	0	0	5 ft.	10 ft.	20 ft.

Minimum Forward Speed: If a flying creature fails to maintain its minimum forward speed, it must land at the end of its movement. If it's too high above the ground to land, it falls straight down, descending 150 feet in the first round of falling. If this distance brings it to the ground, it takes falling damage. If the fall doesn't bring the creature to the ground, it must spend its next turn recovering from the stall. It must succeed on a DC 20 Reflex save to recover; otherwise, it falls an additional 300 feet. If it hits the ground, it takes falling damage. If not, it has another chance to recover on its next turn.

Hover: The ability to stay in one place while airborne.

Move Backward: The ability to move backward without turning around.

Reverse: A creature that has good maneuverability uses up 5 feet of its speed to start flying backward.

Turn: How much the creature can turn after covering the stated distance.

Turn in Place: A creature that has good or average maneuverability can use some of its speed to turn in place.

Maximum Turn: How much the creature can turn in any one space.

Up Angle: The angle at which the creature can climb.

Up Speed: How fast the creature can climb.

Down Angle: The angle at which the creature can descend.

Down Speed: A flying creature can fly down at twice its normal flying speed.

Between Down and Up: An average, poor, or clumsy flier must fly level for a minimum distance after descending and before climbing. Any flier can begin descending after a climb without an intervening distance of level flight.

Hide (Dex; Armor Check Penalty)

You need cover or concealment to attempt a Hide check. Total cover or total concealment usually obviates the need for a Hide check, since nobody can see you anyway. Your Hide check is opposed by the Spot check of anyone who might see you.

You can move up to half your normal speed and hide at no penalty. When moving at a speed greater than half but less than your normal speed, you take a –5 penalty. You can take a –20 penalty on your Hide check to hide while attacking, running, or charging.

If someone is observing you, even casually, you can't hide. You can run around a corner or behind cover so that you're out of sight and then hide, but the others then know at least where you went.

If your observers are momentarily distracted, you can attempt to hide. While the others turn their attention from you, you can attempt a Hide check if you can get to a hiding place of some kind. The hiding place has to be within 1 foot per rank you have in Hide. This check, however, is made at a –10 penalty because you have to move fast.

If you're successfully hidden with respect to another creature, that creature is flat-footed with respect to you. That creature treats you as if you were invisible (see page 76).

Blend into a Crowd: You can use the Hide skill to blend into a crowd, but doing so conceals you only from someone scanning the area to find you. You remain visible to everyone around you, and if they happen to be hostile, they're likely to point you out.

Move between Cover: If you're already hiding thanks to cover or concealment, and you have at least 5 ranks in Hide, you can make a Hide check (with a penalty) to try to move across an area that doesn't offer cover or concealment without revealing yourself. For every 5 ranks in Hide you possess, you can move up to 5 feet between one hiding place and another. For every 5 feet of open space you must cross between hiding places, you take a –5 penalty on your Hide check. Movement speed penalizes the check as normal.

Sneak up from Hiding: You can sneak up on someone after emerging from a hiding place. For every 5 feet of open space between you and the target, you take a –5 penalty on your Hide check. If your Hide check succeeds, your target doesn't notice you until you attack or perform some other attention-grabbing action. Such a target is treated as being flat-footed with respect to you.

Sniping: If you've already successfully hidden at least 10 feet from your target, you can make one ranged attack, then take a move action to hide again. You take a –20 penalty on your Hide check to conceal yourself after the shot.

Jump (Str; Armor Check Penalty)

You can jump as part of your movement. Distance moved by jumping is counted against your normal maximum movement for the turn. The DC and the distance you can cover vary according to the type of jump you're attempting (see below).

Your Jump check is modified by your speed. You take a –6 penalty for every 10 feet of speed you have less than 30 feet. You gain a +4 bonus for every 10 feet of speed you have more than 30 feet.

All Jump DCs given here assume that you get a running start, which requires that you move at least 20 feet in a straight line before jumping. If you don't get a running start, the DC for the jump is doubled.

If you have ranks in Jump and you succeed on a Jump check, you land on your feet (when appropriate). If you attempt a Jump check untrained, you land prone unless you beat the DC by 5 or more.

Long Jump: A long jump is a horizontal jump, made across a gap like a chasm or stream. At the midpoint of the jump, you attain a vertical height equal to one-quarter of the horizontal distance. The DC for the jump is equal to the distance jumped (in feet).

If your check succeeds, you land at the far end. If you fail the check by less than 5, you don't clear the distance, but you grab the far edge of the gap if you succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save. You end your movement grasping the far edge if the save succeeds. If that leaves you dangling over a chasm or gap, clambering up requires a move action and a DC 15 Climb check.

High Jump: A high jump is a vertical leap made to reach something overhead. The DC is equal to four times the distance to be cleared. Vertical reach (see below) can help you reach your intended height.

If you jumped up to grab something, a successful check indicates that you reached the desired height. If you want to pull yourself up, you can do so with a move action and a DC 15 Climb check. If you fail the Jump check, you don't reach the height, and you land in the space you jumped from.

Hop Up: You can jump up onto an object as tall as your waist with a DC 10 Jump check. Doing so counts as 10 feet of movement. You don't need to get a running start to hop up, so the DC isn't doubled if you don't get a running start.

Vertical Reach: The difficulty of reaching a given height varies according to the size of a creature. The maximum vertical reach—the height a creature can reach without jumping—for an average creature of a given size is shown on the following table. Treat quadrupedal creatures as being one size category smaller.

VERTICAL REACH

Creature Size	Vertical Reach
Colossal	128 ft.
Gargantuan	64 ft.
Huge	32 ft.
Large	16 ft.
Medium	8 ft.
Small	4 ft.
Tiny	2 ft.
Diminutive	1 ft.
Fine	1/2 ft.

Move Silently (Dex; Armor Check Penalty)

You can move silently at up to half your normal speed at no penalty. When moving at a speed greater than half but not greater than your full speed, you take a –5 penalty. You take a –20 penalty on checks to move silently while running or charging.

Noisy surfaces, such as pools, undergrowth, and heavy debris impose a –2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Very noisy surfaces, such as dense undergrowth and heavy snow, impose a –5 penalty.

Run

You can run as a full-round action. When you run, you can move up to four times your speed in a straight line. You move up to three times your speed if you're in heavy armor. You're denied your Dexterity bonus to AC, since you can't avoid attacks. You can't run across difficult terrain or if you can't see where you're going.

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You can run for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score, but after that you must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check to continue running. You must check again each round in which you continue to run, and the DC of this check increases by 1 for each check you have previously made. When you fail this check, you must stop running. A creature that has run its limit must rest for 1 minute (10 rounds) before running again. During a rest period, a creature can move no faster than is allowed during a normal move action.

Swim (Str; Armor Check Penalty ×2)

If you don't have a natural swim speed, you can use a move action to swim at up to one-quarter your speed by making an appropriate Swim check. You can use a full-round action swim at up to half your speed by making an appropriate Swim check. By accepting a –10 penalty on your check, you can move twice as quickly using either type of action. If you fail by 4 or less, you make no progress through the water. If you fail by 5 or more, you go underwater and must hold your breath (see Suffocation, page 141).

When underwater, swimming creatures can move in any direction as if flying with perfect maneuverability.

The DC for the Swim check depends on the water, as given on the table below.

SWIM

Water	DC
Calm water	10
Rough water	15
Stormy water[1]	20

[1] You can't take 10 on a Swim check in stormy water, even if you aren't otherwise being threatened or distracted.

Natural Swim Speed: A creature that has a natural swim speed can move through water at its swim speed without making Swim checks. It has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special maneuver or avoid a hazard. The creature can choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. The creature can run while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Jumping in Water: Creatures that have natural swim speeds use that speed to determine how they jump when in water. They take a –10 penalty on high jumps from water, the final result measuring how high the jumper's feet or tail is out of the water after the jump. Creatures that lack a natural swim speed can't jump while in water.

Tumble
(Dex; Trained Only; Armor Check Penalty)

While making Tumble checks, you move at half speed, but you do so only in squares that you make Tumble checks to move through. You can move at full speed while making Tumble checks by adding 10 to each check's DC. You can run while making Tumble checks by adding 20 to each check's DC.

If you succeed on a DC 15 Tumble check, you can move past opponents without provoking attacks of opportunity. You must make a Tumble check to avoid provoking attacks of opportunity from an opponent as you move by that foe, adding 2 to the DC for each opponent after the first. Failure means you provoke attacks of opportunity normally. If two opponents must be passed at the same time, the tumbler chooses which one to check against first.

If you succeed on a DC 25 Tumble check, you can move through an opponent's space (over, under, or around that enemy), provoking no attacks of opportunity. You must make a Tumble check against an opponent as you move through that foe's space, adding 2 to the DC for each opponent after the first. Failure means you stop before entering the opponent's space, and you provoke an attack of opportunity from that foe.

If you succeed on a DC 35 Tumble check, you can stand up from prone as a free action. Standing in this way still provokes attacks of opportunity.

Obstructed or otherwise treacherous surfaces are tough to tumble over. The DC of any Tumble check made to tumble into such a square is modified as indicated on the following table.

TUMBLE

Surface Is . . .	DC Modifier
Lightly obstructed (light debris, shallow water, undergrowth)	+2
Severely obstructed (natural cavern floor, heavy debris, dense undergrowth)	+5
Lightly slippery (wet floor)	+2
Severely slippery (ice sheet)	+5
Sloped or angled	+2

[1] Tumbling is impossible in a deep bog.

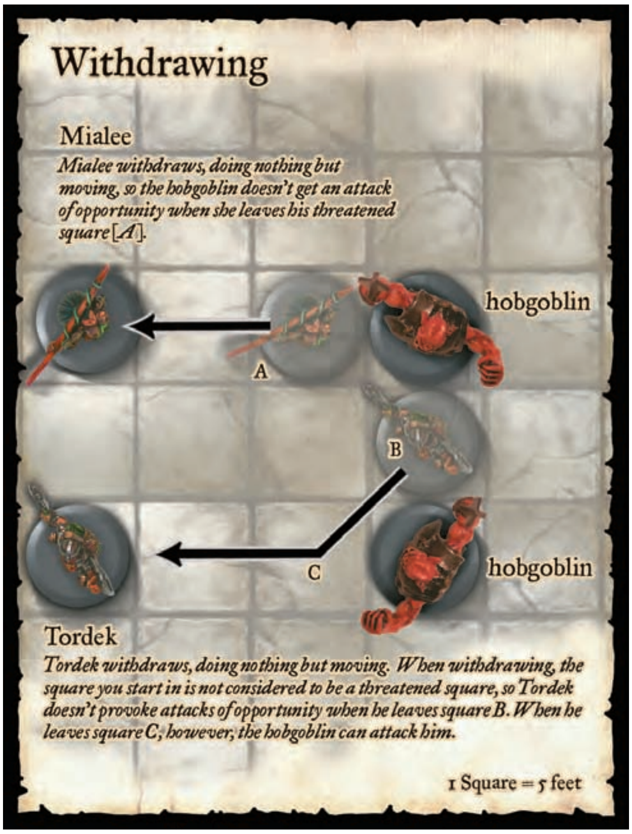
Withdraw

Withdrawing is a full-round action. When you withdraw, you can move up to double your speed. The square you start out in isn't considered threatened by any opponent you can see, and therefore visible enemies don't get attacks of opportunity against you when you move from that square. Invisible enemies still get attacks of opportunity against you, and you can't withdraw from combat if you're blinded.

If, during the process of withdrawing, you move out of a threatened square other than the one you started in, those threatening that square can make attacks of opportunity as normal for your movement.

You can't withdraw using a mode of movement for which you don't have a natural speed.

Restricted Activity: If you're unable to take a full round's worth of actions on your turn, such as during a surprise round, you can withdraw as a standard action. In this case, you can move up to your speed rather than up to double your speed. All other rules for withdrawing still apply.



Withdrawing

Mialee
Mialee withdraws, doing nothing but moving, so the hobgoblin doesn't get an attack of opportunity when she leaves his threatened square [A].

Tordek
Tordek withdraws, doing nothing but moving. When withdrawing, the square you start in is not considered to be a threatened square, so Tordek doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity when he leaves square B. When he leaves square C, however, the hobgoblin can attack him.

1 Square = 5 feet

DIAGONAL MOVEMENT

When measuring distance, the first diagonal counts as 1 square, the second counts as 2 squares, the third counts as 1, the fourth as 2, and so on. You can't move diagonally past a corner. You can move diagonally past a creature, even an opponent. You can also move diagonally past other impassable obstacles, such as pits.

LEGAL MOVEMENT

Whether you can move through a square and how much effort it takes depends on what's in that square already.

Friend

You can move through a square occupied by a friendly creature, unless you're charging. When you move through a square occupied by a friendly creature, that creature doesn't provide you with cover.

Opponent

Generally, you can't move through a square occupied by an opponent. This rule has the following exceptions.

Extreme Size Difference: You can move through the squares in the space of an opponent three or more size categories larger than you are. You can also move through the space of an opponent three or more size categories smaller than you are.

Helpless: You can move through a square occupied by a helpless opponent, but a creature, particularly a very large one, might present an obstacle even when helpless. In such cases, each square the creature occupies counts as difficult terrain (see Hampered Movement, below).

Overrun: During your movement, you can attempt to move through a square occupied by an opponent by using the overrun special attack (see page 108).

Special Abilities: Some special abilities allow you to move through squares in an opponent's space or make it so an opponent can't stop you from moving through its space, but you provoke an attack of opportunity from a creature whose space you enter unless a special ability also prevents such an attack.

Tumbling: A creature trained in the Tumble skill can try to tumble through a square occupied by an opponent (see Tumble, above) without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Very Small Creature: A Tiny or smaller creature can move through squares occupied by an opponent. Such a creature provokes attacks of opportunity for doing so.

Other Exceptions: Some creatures break these rules. You can't move through squares completely filled by a creature, even if you have the Tumble skill some sort of special ability, unless the ability's description says otherwise or the DM rules otherwise.

Sharing Spaces

If you're Small or larger, you usually can't end your movement in a square occupied by another Small or larger creature, effectively sharing a space with that creature. You can share space with a creature that is helpless or one that has a special ability that allows it to share spaces. You can also share spaces with a creature you're riding or carrying, or a creature you're grappling. If you have a special ability that allows you to do so, you can share a space with another creature. Regardless, you still provoke an attack of opportunity from a creature whose space you enter.

Tiny and smaller creatures can freely share space with other creatures (see Size, page 116).

If you're in a space with a helpless Small or larger creature that ceases being helpless, and for whatever reason that creature can't share spaces with you, it must remain prone, attempt to grapple you, or leave your space at its first opportunity. It provokes attacks of opportunity as normal for what it does.

HAMPERED MOVEMENT

The rules presented so far assume that you're moving through an area clear of obstacles or difficult terrain. They also assume you have enough space to move freely. However, these situations aren't always true. The following table summarizes situations that hamper movement.

HAMPERED MOVEMENT

Situation	Movement Cost
Difficult terrain	× 2
Obstacle[1]	× 2
Poor visibility	× 2
Squeezing	× 2
Impassable	—

[1] Might require a skill check.

Difficult Terrain

Difficult terrain includes heavy debris, shallow water, slopes that can be walked up, undergrowth, and similar environmental factors that slow and hamper movement. Each square of difficult terrain counts as 2 squares of movement. Each diagonal square counts as 3 squares. You can't run or charge across difficult terrain. If you occupy a space that includes different kinds of terrain, you can move only as fast as the most difficult terrain in your space allows. Flying and incorporeal creatures aren't hampered by difficult terrain.

Obstacles

Like difficult terrain, obstacles can hamper movement. If an obstacle hampers movement but doesn't completely block it, each obstructed square costs double the normal movement cost.

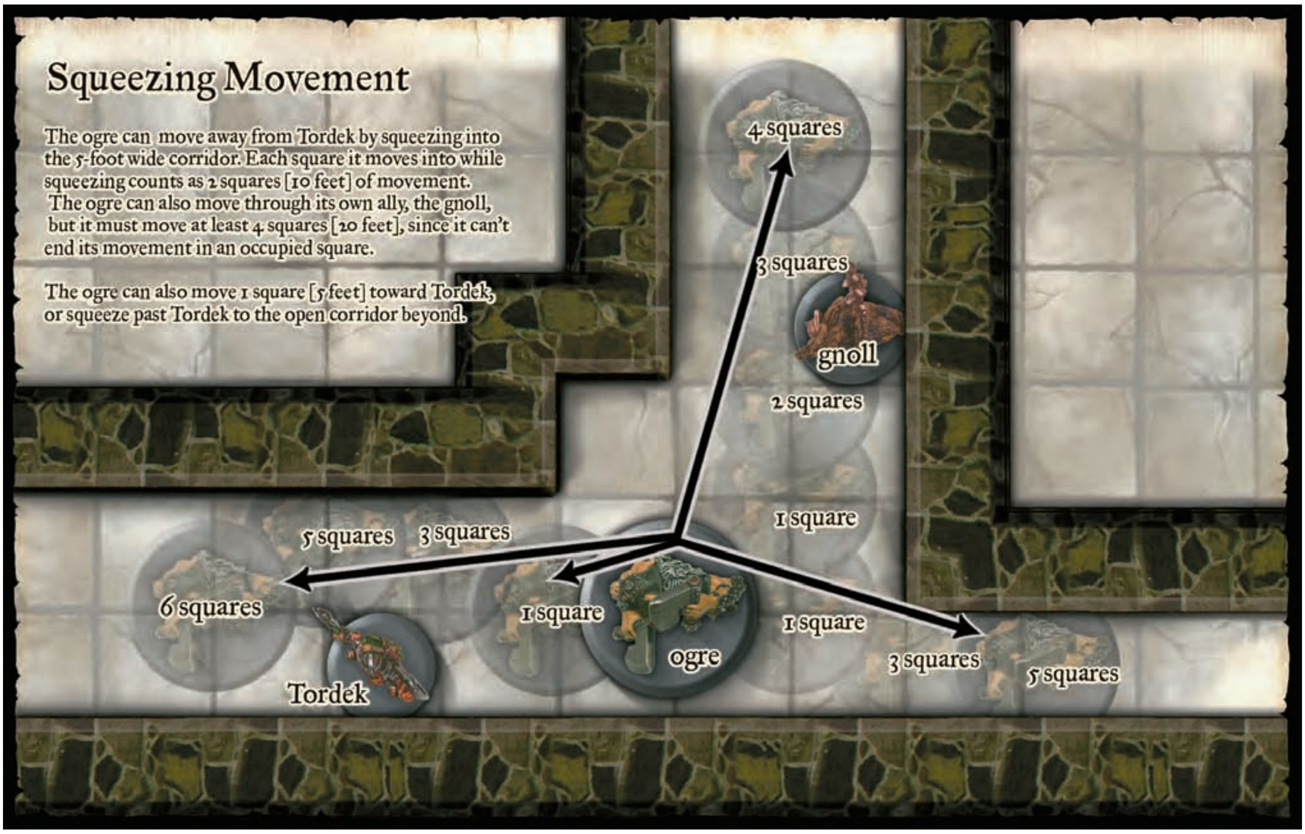
It costs 2 squares of movement to cross an obstacle that separates two squares. You must pay this cost to cross the barrier, in addition to the cost to move into the square on the other side. If you don't have sufficient movement to cross the barrier and move into the square on the other side, you can't cross the barrier.

Some obstacles might also require a skill check to cross. Other obstacles block movement entirely. A creature can't move through a blocking obstacle. Flying and incorporeal creatures can easily avoid many obstacles.

Squeezing

In some cases, you might have to squeeze into or through an area that isn't as wide as the space you take up, hampering your movement. You can squeeze through or into a space that is at least half as wide as your normal space. Each move into or through a narrow space costs double. While squeezed in a narrow space, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty to AC.

Space Occupied by Big Creatures: When a Large creature squeezes into a space that's 1 square wide, the creature's miniature figure occupies 2 squares, centered on the line between those squares. For a bigger creature, center the creature likewise in the area it squeezes into.



Squeezing Movement

The ogre can move away from Tordek by squeezing into the 5-foot wide corridor. Each square it moves into while squeezing counts as 2 squares [10 feet] of movement. The ogre can also move through its own ally, the gnoll, but it must move at least 4 squares [20 feet], since it can't end its movement in an occupied square.

The ogre can also move 1 square [5 feet] toward Tordek, or squeeze past Tordek to the open corridor beyond.

Squeezing Past an Opponent: A creature can squeeze past an opponent while moving, provoking attacks of opportunity as normal for its movement. A creature still can't end its movement in an occupied square.

Squeezing into Very Tight Spaces: To squeeze through or into a space less than half your space's width, you must succeed on a DC 30 Escape Artist check. You can't attack while using Escape Artist to squeeze through or into a narrow space, you take a –4 penalty to AC, and you're denied your Dexterity bonus to AC.

SPECIAL MOVEMENT RULES

The following rules cover special movement situations.

Ending Movement in an Illegal Space

Sometimes a creature ends its movement while moving through a space it isn't allowed to stop in. When that happens, put the creature in the last legal position it occupied or the closest legal position, whichever is closer.

Movement Cost

When your movement is hampered in some way, your movement usually costs double. As with all real-world values, movement costs are multiplied by normal math rules. If movement cost is doubled twice, then each square counts as 4 squares, and each diagonal square counts as 6 squares. If movement cost is doubled three times, then each square counts as 8 squares (12 if diagonal) and so on.

Minimum Movement

Despite penalties to movement, you can take a full-round action to move 5 feet (1 square) into a legal space, even diagonally. Doing this doesn't allow you to move through impassable terrain or to move when movement is prohibited, such as when you're paralyzed. Such movement provokes attacks of opportunity as normal—despite the distance covered, this move isn't a 5-foot step.

Chases

In round-by-round movement, simply counting off squares, it's impossible for a slow creature without favorable circumstances to get away from a determined fast creature. It's no problem for a fast creature to get away from a slower one.

When the speeds of two creatures are equal, and one creature is pursuing another, both are moving at the same speed, and the chase continues for at least a few rounds, have them make opposed Dexterity checks to see who is the faster over those rounds. If the creature being chased wins, it escapes. If the pursuer wins, it catches the fleeing creature.

Freeform Movement

When the characters aren't engaged in round-by-round combat, they should be able to move anywhere and in any manner that you can imagine real people could. A 5-foot square can hold several Medium creatures. Those creatures just can't all fight effectively in that small space. The rules for movement are important for combat, but outside combat they can impose unnecessary hindrances on character activities.

During casual (noncombat) scenes, you usually won't have to worry about movement rates. When how far a creature can move in a nontactical situation is important, local and overland movement come into play.

LOCAL MOVEMENT

Creatures exploring an area use local movement, measured in feet per minute. While moving on a local scale, you walk, hustle, or run. The Local Movement and Distance table gives actual distances.

Walk: A walk represents unhurried movement.

Hustle: A hustle is a jog.

Run: Running is speedy and purposeful movement—about 12 miles per hour for an unencumbered human, or 8 miles per hour for a human in medium or heavy armor. You can run for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution score, but after that you must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check to continue running. You must check again in each round in which you continue to run, and the DC of this check increases by 1 for each check you have previously made. When you fail this check, you must stop running. A creature that has run its limit must rest for 1 minute (10 rounds) before running again. During a rest period, a creature can move no faster than a hustle on the local scale.

Local Movement and Distance

	Speed			
1 Minute	15 feet	20 feet	30 feet	40 feet
Walk	150 ft.	200 ft.	300 ft.	400 ft.
Hustle	300 ft.	400 ft.	600 ft.	800 ft.
Run (× 3)	450 ft.	600 ft.	900 ft.	1,200 ft.
Run (× 4)	600 ft.	800 ft.	1,200 ft.	1,600 ft.

TAILING

While moving on the local scale, you can use Hide to follow someone while remaining unseen. If you stay at least 60 feet away from your quarry, you must succeed on a Hide check opposed by your quarry's Spot check once every 10 minutes. At a distance of less than 60 feet, you must make a Hide check each round and begin operating on the combat scale. Extraordinary activities on your part (such as spellcasting or attacking) can disrupt this attempt even if you succeed on the check.

Tailing someone still requires cover or concealment, as normal for attempting a Hide check. A moderately crowded street provides sufficient cover and concealment to accomplish this goal. Alternatively, you can duck between areas of cover or concealment, as described in Move between Cover for the Hide skill (see page 92).

Even if you fail a Hide check while tailing someone or you're spotted while moving too great a distance between hiding places, you can attempt a Bluff check opposed by your quarry's Sense Motive check to look innocuous. Success means your quarry sees you but doesn't realize you're tailing him; failure alerts him that you're actually following. A modifier might apply to the Sense Motive check, depending on how suspicious your quarry is. The following table provides Sense Motive modifiers for particular situations.

Tailing

Your Quarry . . .	Sense Motive Modifier
Is sure nobody is following	–5
Has no reason to suspect anybody is following	+0
Is worried about being followed	+10
Is worried about being followed and knows you're an enemy	+20

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OVERLAND MOVEMENT

Creatures covering long distances cross-country use overland movement. Overland movement is measured in miles per hour or miles per day. You can walk or hustle on an overland scale, but you can't run for an extended period. Attempts to run and rest in cycles effectively work out to a hustle. A day represents 8 hours of actual travel time. The table below gives the distances covered by creatures that move for a certain length of time at a particular speed.

Walk: A walk represents about 3 miles per hour for an unencumbered human. You can walk 8 hours in a day of travel without a problem. The rest of the daylight time is spent making and breaking camp, resting, and eating. Walking for longer than that can wear you out. See Forced March.

Hustle: A hustle represents about 6 miles per hour for an unencumbered human. You can hustle for 1 hour without a problem. Hustling for a second hour in between periods of sleep or rest deals 1 point of nonlethal damage, and each additional hour deals twice the damage taken during the previous hour of hustling. A creature that takes any nonlethal damage from hustling becomes fatigued.

OVERLAND MOVEMENT AND DISTANCE

	Speed			
1 Hour	**15 feet**	**20 feet**	**30 feet**	**40 feet**
Walk	1-1/2 miles	2 miles	3 miles	4 miles
Hustle	3 miles	4 miles	6 miles	8 miles
1 Day	**15 feet**	**20 feet**	**30 feet**	**40 feet**
Walk	12 miles	16 miles	24 miles	32 miles

TERRAIN

The terrain through which you travel affects how much distance you can cover in an hour or a day. See the Terrain and Overland Movement table.

Highway: A highway is a straight, major, paved road.

Road: A road is typically a dirt track.

Trail: A trail is like a road, except that it allows only single-file travel and doesn't benefit a party traveling with vehicles.

Trackless: Trackless terrain is a wild area with no paths.

TERRAIN AND OVERLAND MOVEMENT

Terrain	Highway	Road or Trail	Trackless
Desert, sandy	× 1	× 1/2	× 1/2
Forest	× 1	× 1	× 1/2
Hills	× 1	× 3/4	× 1/2
Jungle	× 1	× 3/4	× 1/4
Moor	× 1	× 1	× 3/4
Mountains	× 3/4	× 3/4	× 1/2
Plains	× 1	× 1	× 3/4
Swamp	× 1	× 3/4	× 1/2
Tundra	× 1	× 3/4	× 3/4

Trailblazing

A successful DC 15 Survival check improves the factor by which movement is modified by terrain by × 1/4 up to a maximum of × 1. A successful DC 25 Survival check improves the factor by × 1/2, also up to a maximum of × 1. A trailblazer can guide four others without penalty, but takes a –2 penalty on this check for every three additional creatures beyond the original four. Trailblazing improves only overland movement, and only one check can be made per day.

FORCED MARCH

You can walk for more than 8 hours in a day by making a forced march. For each hour of marching beyond 8 hours, a Constitution check (DC 10, +2 per extra hour) is required. If the check fails, you take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. A creature that takes any nonlethal damage from a forced march becomes fatigued. Eliminating the nonlethal damage also eliminates the fatigue. It's possible to march until you become unconscious.

Pushing a Mount

A mount bearing a rider can be ordered to move at a hustle. The damage it takes when doing so, however, is lethal damage, not nonlethal damage. The creature can also be ridden in a forced march, but its Constitution checks automatically fail, and, again, the damage it takes is lethal damage. Mounts become fatigued when they take any damage from hustling or forced marches.

See the table below for mounted speeds and speeds for vehicles pulled by draft animals.

MOVEMENT FOR MOUNTS AND VEHICLES

Land Transport	Per Hour	Per Day
Cart or wagon	2 miles	16 miles
Mount (load carried, if any)		
Light horse or light warhorse	6 miles	48 miles
Light horse (151–450 lb.)	4 miles	32 miles
Light warhorse (231–690 lb.)	4 miles	32 miles
Heavy horse or heavy warhorse	5 miles	40 miles
Heavy horse (201–600 lb.)	3-1/2 miles	28 miles
Heavy warhorse (301–900 lb.)	3-1/2 miles	28 miles
Pony or warpony	4 miles	32 miles
Pony (76–225 lb.)	3 miles	24 miles
Warpony (101–300 lb.)	3 miles	24 miles
Donkey or mule	3 miles	24 miles
Donkey (51–150 lb.)	2 miles	16 miles
Mule (231–690 lb.)	2 miles	16 miles
Dog, riding	4 miles	32 miles
Dog, riding (101–300 lb.)	3 miles	24 miles
Watercraft		
Raft or barge (poled or towed)	1/2 mile	5 miles
Keelboat (rowed)	1 mile	10 miles
Rowboat (rowed)	1-1/2 miles	15 miles
Sailing ship (sailed)	2 miles	48 miles
Warship (sailed and rowed)	2-1/2 miles	60 miles
Longship (sailed and rowed)	3 miles	72 miles
Galley (rowed and sailed)	4 miles	96 miles

WATERBORNE MOVEMENT

See the Movement for Mounts and Vehicles table for speeds for water vehicles. For rowed watercraft, a day represents 10 hours of rowing. For a sailing ship, it represents 24 hours of sailing.

Rafts, barges, keelboats, and rowboats are used on lakes and rivers. If going downstream, add the speed of the current (typically 3 miles per hour) to the speed of the vehicle. In addition to 10 hours of being rowed, the vehicle can also float for an additional 14 hours, if someone can guide it, so add an additional 42 miles to the daily distance traveled. These vehicles can't be rowed against a significant current, but they can be pulled upstream by animals on the shore.

CHASES

Sometimes a chase occurs overland and could last all day, with the two sides only occasionally getting glimpses of each other at a distance. In the case of a long chase, an opposed Constitution check made by all parties determines which can keep pace the longest. If the creature being chased rolls the highest, it gets away. If not, the chaser runs down its prey, outlasting it with stamina.

MARCHING ORDER

The characters in a party need to decide what their marching order is. Marching order is the relative position of the characters to each other while they're moving (who is in front of or next to whom). Arrange miniatures on the battle grid to represent the PCs' relative locations. You can change the marching order as the party enters different areas, as characters are wounded, or at other times for any reason.

LIVING OFF THE LAND

A creature can move at half speed during overland travel, hunting and foraging, providing food and water for itself by succeeding on a DC 10 Survival check. This DC increases by 5 for inhospitable lands, such as a desert, and by 10 for barren lands, including the open ocean for nonaquatic creatures. Survival can even be used in this way in an urban environment. A survivalist can provide food for one other creature for every 2 points by which the Survival check result exceeds the DC.

GETTING LOST

Following an obvious road, trail, or feature, such as a stream or shoreline, prevents any possibility of becoming lost, but travelers striking off cross-country might become disoriented—especially in conditions of poor visibility or in rough terrain.

Visibility

Any time you can't see at least 60 feet in the prevailing conditions of visibility, you might become lost. Those traveling in poor visibility easily lose the ability to see any landmarks not in their immediate vicinity.

Terrain

Those in forest, moor, hill, or mountain terrain might become lost if they move away from an obvious path or track. Forests are especially bad because they obscure other landmarks and make it hard to see the sun or stars.

Chance to Get Lost

If conditions exist that make getting lost a possibility, the creature leading the way must succeed on a Survival check once per hour (or portion of an hour) spent in local or overland movement or become lost. The DM makes the check, since the party might not realize it's lost. A creature that has at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) pertaining to the area being traveled through receives a +2 bonus on this check. A creature that has 5 or more ranks in Survival can determine which direction is north by succeeding on a DC 15 Survival check, and such a creature can use that information to avoid getting lost. The difficulty of the Survival check to avoid getting lost varies based on the terrain, the visibility conditions, and whether the party has a map of the area. Refer to the following table, and use the highest DC that applies.

AVOIDING GETTING LOST

Terrain	Survival DC
Forest	15
Moor or hill, map	6
Moor or hill, no map	10
Mountain, map	8
Mountain, no map	12
Poor visibility	12

Effects of Being Lost

If a party becomes lost, it's no longer certain of moving in the direction it intended to travel. The DM randomly determines the actual direction of travel during each hour of local or overland movement. The characters' movement continues to be random until they blunder into a landmark, or until they recognize that they're lost and make an effort to regain their bearings.

Recognizing that You're Lost: Once per hour of random travel, each character in the party can attempt a Survival check (DC 20, –1 per hour of random travel) to recognize that they're no longer certain of their direction of travel. Circumstances, such as an established and known time of travel between two locations, might make it obvious that the characters are lost.

Setting a New Course: A lost party is also uncertain of determining the direction it should travel to reach a desired objective. Determining the correct direction of travel once a party has become lost requires a member to make a Survival check (DC 15, +2 per hour of random travel). The DM makes the check. If the check fails, the character chooses a random direction as the correct direction for resuming travel.

Once the characters are traveling along their new course, correct or incorrect, they might get lost again. If the conditions still make it possible for travelers to become lost, check once per hour.

Natural Attacks

Natural attacks come in two forms—natural weapons and special attacks. Natural weapons, such as fangs or claws, are physically a part of a creature. Special attacks are special ways a creature can use its inborn attributes to harm other creatures.

ATTACKS

A creature making a melee attack with a natural weapon is considered armed and doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Likewise, it threatens any space it can reach. Unless otherwise noted, a natural weapon threatens a critical hit on a natural attack roll of 20.

Creatures don't receive additional attacks from a high base attack bonus when using natural weapons. The number of attacks a creature can make with its natural weapons depends on the type of the attack—a creature can make one bite attack, one attack per claw or tentacle, one gore attack, one sting attack, or one slam attack. Large or larger creatures that have arms or armlike limbs can make a slam attack with each arm. Refer to the individual monster descriptions, which take precedence over these general rules.

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PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

When a creature has more than one natural weapon, one of them, or sometimes a pair or set of them, is the primary weapon. All the creature's remaining natural weapons are secondary.

A creature's primary natural weapon is its most effective natural weapon, and the creature uses its full attack bonus with that weapon. It applies its full Strength modifier on damage with its primary weapon—or 1-1/2 × its Strength bonus if it has only one natural weapon. A Strength penalty on damage rolls applies whenever a creature uses a natural weapon, but it isn't multiplied.

Attacks with secondary natural weapons are made with a –5 penalty on the attack roll, no matter how many the creature has. This penalty applies even when the creature makes a single attack with a secondary natural weapon, even as an attack of opportunity. A creature applies 1/2 its Strength bonus to damage dealt by a secondary natural weapon (but its full Strength penalty), even when the secondary natural weapon is used alone as a single attack.

WEAPON TYPES

Natural weapons have types just as other weapons do. The most common are summarized here.

Bite: The creature attacks with its mouth, dealing piercing, slashing, and bludgeoning damage.

Claw or Talon: The creature rips with a sharp appendage, dealing piercing and slashing damage.

Gore: The creature spears the opponent with an antler, horn, or similar appendage, dealing piercing damage.

Slap or Slam: The creature batters opponents with an appendage, dealing bludgeoning damage.

Sting: The creature stabs with a stinger, dealing piercing damage. Sting attacks usually deal damage from poison in addition to hit point damage.

Tentacle: The creature flails at opponents with a powerful tentacle, dealing bludgeoning damage. Tentacles sometimes deal slashing damage in addition to bludgeoning damage.

COMBINING WEAPONS

Some creatures combine attacks with natural and manufactured weapons when they make a full attack. When they do so, the manufactured weapon attack is considered the primary attack unless the creature's description indicates otherwise, and any natural weapons the creature also uses are considered secondary. These secondary attacks don't interfere with the primary attack, but they take the usual penalty for being secondary attacks, even if the natural weapon used is normally the creature's primary natural weapon.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Many special attacks affect the way a creature uses its natural weapons or provide a creature with another natural form of attack.

Aligned Strike

Attacks made by a creature that has this supernatural special attack are treated as aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. The specific alignment or alignments are noted in parentheses (chaotic, evil, good, or lawful).

Constrict

A creature that has this extraordinary special attack can crush an opponent, dealing bludgeoning damage, after making a successful grapple check to deal damage. The amount of damage is given in the creature's entry. If the creature also has the improved grab ability, it deals damage from the constrict attack in addition to damage dealt by the weapon used to grab.

Disease

A creature that has this extraordinary special attack can infect another creature with disease. Diseases can be extraordinary or supernatural, even if the special attack that inflicts the disease is extraordinary.

Epic Strike

Natural weapon attacks made by a creature that has this supernatural special attack are treated as having a +6 magical enhancement bonus for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Improved Grab

If a creature that has this extraordinary special attack hits with a natural melee weapon (usually a claw or bite attack), it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. No initial melee touch attack is required. Unless otherwise noted, improved grab works only against opponents at least one size category smaller than the creature.

When a creature gets a hold after an improved grab attack, it pulls the opponent into its space. This act doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. The creature has the option to conduct the grapple normally or simply use the part of its body it used in the improved grab to hold the opponent. If it chooses to do the latter, it takes a –20 penalty on grapple checks, but it isn't considered grappled itself. Thus, the creature isn't denied its Dexterity bonus to AC, still threatens an area, and can use its remaining attacks against other opponents.

Whenever the creature makes a successful grapple check to deal damage, it deals the damage indicated for the natural weapon that it used to make the improved grab. If the creature also has the constrict ability, it deals damage from the constrict attack in addition to damage dealt by the natural weapon used to grab.

Magic Strike

Natural weapon attacks made by a creature that has this supernatural special attack are treated as magic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Paralysis

A creature that has this special attack can render another creature paralyzed. This special attack can be extraordinary or supernatural.

Poison

A creature that has this extraordinary special attack can poison another creature.

Pounce

When a creature that has this extraordinary special attack charges, it can still make a full attack even if it charged while restricted to a single action. All its attacks receive the +2 bonus on attack rolls gained from charging. If it uses its attacks to successfully start a grapple, and it has the rake ability, it can also make rake attacks.

Powerful Charge

When a creature that has this extraordinary special attack makes a charge, its attack deals extra damage in addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge. (This ability is similar to but not the same as the feat of the same name.)

Rake

A creature that has this extraordinary special attack gains extra natural attacks when it grapples. Normally, a monster can attack with only one of its natural weapons when grappling, but a creature that has the rake ability usually gains two additional claw attacks that it can use only against a grappled foe. Rake attacks aren't subject to the usual –4 penalty for attacking with a natural weapon in a grapple, and they use the creature's normal attack bonus. The extra rake attacks deal normal damage for the natural weapon used + 1/2 the creature's Strength bonus or its full Strength penalty.

A monster that has the rake ability must begin its turn grappling to use its rake. It can't begin a grapple and rake during the same turn unless it has the pounce ability or some other ability that allows it to start a grapple and rake during the same turn.

Rend

If a creature that has this extraordinary special attack hits with the specified natural attack, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. The rend attack deals damage equal to that dealt by the creature's natural weapon + 1-1/2 times its Strength bonus or its full Strength penalty.

Swallow Whole

If a creature that has this extraordinary special attack begins its turn with an opponent held in its mouth, it can attempt a new grapple check. If it succeeds, it swallows that foe, dealing normal damage for a bite. The opponent must usually be smaller than the swallowing creature.

Being swallowed has various consequences, depending on the creature doing the swallowing. A swallowed opponent is considered to be grappled, but the creature that did the swallowing isn't. A swallowed opponent can try to cut its way free with any light slashing or piercing weapon, or it can try to escape the grapple. The inside of a creature normally has an Armor Class of 5 + 1/2 its natural armor bonus, with no modifiers for size or Dexterity. If the swallowed opponent escapes the grapple, it ends up back in the attacker's mouth, where it can be bitten or swallowed again.

Trample

As a full-round action, a creature that has this extraordinary special attack can move up to twice its speed and run over any opponents at least one size category smaller than it. The creature merely has to move over the opponents in its path; any creature whose space is completely covered by the trampling creature's space is subject to the trample attack.

If a target's space is larger than 5 feet, it is considered trampled only if the trampling creature moves over all the squares it occupies. If the trampling creature moves over only some of a target's space, the target can make an attack of opportunity against the trampling creature at a –4 penalty.

The creature's description indicates the amount of bludgeoning damage the trample deals (usually the creature's slam damage + 1-1/2 × its Strength bonus or its full Strength penalty).

Trampled opponents can attempt attacks of opportunity, taking a –4 penalty on the attack roll. If they don't make attacks of opportunity, trampled opponents can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage. The save DC against a creature's trample attack is 10 + 1/2 creature's HD + its Str modifier (the exact DC is given in the creature's descriptive text). A creature can deal damage from trampling to each target only once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over that target.

Natural Hazards

Nature itself is sometimes a formidable obstacle, or even a serious threat to life and limb.

ALTITUDE

High altitude can be extremely fatiguing—and sometimes deadly—to creatures that aren't used to it. Cold becomes extreme, and the lack of oxygen in the air can wear down even the hardiest warriors.

ACCLIMATED CREATURES

Creatures that are accustomed to high altitude fare better than those that aren't. Any creature whose Environment entry mentions or includes mountains is considered native to the area, and thus acclimated to the high altitude. Creatures can also acclimate themselves by living at high altitude for a month or by acquiring a related feat or ability. Those who spend more than two months away from the mountains must reacclimate themselves when they return.

Undead, constructs, and other creatures that don't breathe are immune to altitude effects.

ALTITUDE ZONES

Mountains present three possible altitude bands—low pass, low peak/high pass, and high peak.

Low Pass (lower than 5,000 feet)

Most travel in low mountains takes place in low passes, a zone consisting largely of alpine meadows and forests. Travelers might find the going difficult, but the altitude has no game effect.

Low Peak or High Pass (to 15,000 feet)

Ascending to the highest slopes of low mountains, or most normal travel through high mountains, falls into this category. All nonacclimated creatures labor to breathe in the thin air at this altitude. Such creatures must succeed on a Fortitude save each hour (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or become fatigued. The fatigue ends when the creature descends to an altitude where more air is present.

High Peak (more than 15,000 feet)

At these elevations, creatures are subject to both high altitude fatigue and altitude sickness, whether or not they're acclimated to high altitude. Altitude sickness represents long-term oxygen deprivation, and it affects mental and physical ability scores. After each 6-hour period a creature spends at an altitude of over 15,000 feet, that creature must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1 point of damage to all ability scores. Creatures acclimated to high altitude receive a +4 competence bonus on their saving throws to resist high altitude effects and altitude sickness, but eventually even seasoned mountaineers must abandon these dangerous elevations.

AVALANCHES

The combination of high peaks and heavy snowfalls means that avalanches are a deadly peril in many mountainous areas. Although avalanches of snow and ice are common, it's also possible to have an avalanche of rock and soil.

Avalanches of snow and ice advance at a speed of 500 feet per round. Earth and rock avalanches travel at a speed of 250 feet per round.

An avalanche consists of two distinct areas: the bury zone in the direct path of the falling debris and the slide zone, which is the area the debris spreads out to encompass. The typical avalanche has a width of 1d6×100 feet, from one edge of the slide zone to the opposite edge. The bury zone in the center of an avalanche is half as wide as the avalanche's full width.

To determine the precise location of creatures in the path of an avalanche, roll 1d6×20—the result is the number of feet from the center of the path taken by the bury zone to the center of a group's location.

SENSING AN AVALANCHE

An avalanche can be spotted from as far away as 1d10×500 feet downslope by a creature that makes a Spot check with a +16 bonus due to the avalanche's size. With no other loud noises occurring, creatures that succeed on a DC 15 Listen check can hear an avalanche when it's 1d6×500 feet away. If all creatures fail their checks, the avalanche moves closer to them, and they automatically become aware of it when it closes to half the original distance at which it could have been spotted.

AVALANCHE EFFECTS

Creatures in the bury zone take 8d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 15 half). They're subsequently buried. Creatures in the slide zone take 3d6 points of damage (Reflex DC 15 negates). Those that fail their saves are buried. Both zones are filled with heavy debris (difficult terrain that affects some skill checks as detailed in the Movement entry, pages 90–95).

Buried

Buried creatures take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute. If a buried creature falls unconscious, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute thereafter until freed or killed.

Digging Out

Creatures that aren't buried can dig out others. In 1 minute, using only its hands, a digger can clear debris equal to five times its maximum load (see page 47). Loose stone that fills a 5-foot-by-5-foot area weighs 2,000 pounds. Snow and ice weighs one-fifth that much. Equipped with an appropriate tool, a digger can clear material twice as quickly. A buried creature can free itself with a DC 25 Strength check, at the DM's option.

CAVE-INS

Cave-ins and collapsing tunnels are extremely dangerous. A weakened ceiling might collapse when subjected to a major impact or concussion. By destroying half the pillars holding up a weakened ceiling, a creature can cause a cave-in. A weakened ceiling can be spotted with a DC 20 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check or a DC 20 Craft (stonemasonry) check.

CAVE-IN EFFECTS

Like avalanches, cave-ins have bury zones and slide zones. A typical corridor subject to a cave-in has a bury zone with a 15-foot radius and a 10-foot-radius slide zone.

LAVA

Lava deals 2d6 points of fire damage per round of exposure, except in the case of total immersion, which deals 20d6 points of fire damage per round. Damage from lava continues for 1d3 rounds after exposure ceases, but this additional damage is only half of that dealt during actual contact.

A creature immune to fire might still suffocate (see page 141) if completely immersed in lava.

QUICKSAND

Patches of quicksand present a deceptively solid appearance. A typical patch of quicksand is 20 feet in diameter.

A creature approaching a patch of quicksand at normal speed is entitled to a DC 15 Survival check to spot the danger before stepping in, but charging or running creatures don't have a chance to detect quicksand. The momentum of a charging or running creature carries it 1d2×5 feet into the quicksand.

QUICKSAND EFFECTS

Creatures in quicksand must succeed on a DC 10 Swim check every round to simply stay in place, or a DC 15 Swim check to move 5 feet. If a trapped creature fails this check by 5 or more, it sinks below the surface and must hold its breath (see page 141). Creatures below the surface can swim to the surface by succeeding on a Swim check (DC 15, +1 per consecutive round of being under the surface).

Rescuing Quicksand Victims

Rescuing a creature in quicksand requires the rescuer to have a tool that enables reaching the victim with one end of it. Then the rescuer must succeed on a DC 15 Strength check to pull the victim, and the victim must succeed on a DC 10 Strength check to hold onto the tool. If the victim fails to hold on, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Swim check immediately to stay above the surface. If both checks succeed, the victim is pulled 5 feet closer to safety.

SMOKE

Smoke obscures vision and can hamper breathing. Thin smoke obscures all sight beyond 60 feet, including darkvision. Creatures separated by more than 30 feet of thin smoke have concealment with respect to one another. Creatures separated by 60 feet of thin smoke have total concealment with respect to one another. Breathing thin smoke isn't dangerous.

Thick Smoke

Thick smoke grants creatures 5 feet away concealment. Creatures more than 5 feet away have total concealment. A creature that breathes thick smoke must succeed on a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round doing nothing but choking and coughing. Choking in this way for 2 consecutive rounds deals 1d6 points of nonlethal damage.

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WATER

Water is most dangerous to those who can't breathe in it, as well as those who lack a natural swim speed. Any creature can wade in relatively calm water that isn't over its head, with no check required. Moving through deep, nonflowing water requires a natural swim speed or successful Swim checks (see page 94). Air-breathing creatures need a way to breathe if they're underwater, or else they risk drowning (see Suffocation, page 141).

COLD WATER

If water is freezing cold, it deals 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per round. This counts as cold damage for the purpose of immunity or resistance. A creature that takes nonlethal damage from cold water is fatigued.

DEEP WATER

Deep water deals 1d6 points of damage per minute for every 100 feet a creature is below the surface due to water pressure. A successful Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) means the diver takes no damage in that minute.

Aquatic creatures don't take damage until they're below 500 feet, and they take only 1d6 points of damage per 200 feet below that depth.

Deep water is usually cold.

FLOWING WATER

Some bodies of water flow swiftly, and anything floating in them moves downstream at a speed of 10 to 40 feet per round. Rapids send swimmers downstream at 60 to 90 feet per round. Fast streams are always at least rough water, and rapids are considered stormy water. If a creature is in moving water, move that creature downstream the indicated distance at the end of its turn. A creature trying to maintain its position must swim upstream.

Creatures swept away by a stream moving 60 feet per round or faster must make DC 20 Swim checks every round to avoid going under. If a creature makes the check by 5 or more, it might be able to arrest its motion by catching a stationary object in the water. Swimming to the bank requires as many DC 20 Swim checks as are needed for the creature to cover the distance to the shore.

Even if its Swim check succeeds, a creature swept away by rapids takes 1d3 points of nonlethal damage per round. It takes 1d6 points of lethal damage if the water is flowing over rocks and cascades.

Floods

Natural and catastrophic events can create floods. During a typical flood, rivers become wider, deeper, and swifter. Assume that a river rises by 1d10+10 feet during the spring flood, and its width increases by 1d4×50%. A river in flood stage has water one step rougher for Swim checks (see page 94). Flooding rivers also become 50% swifter.

Flash Floods

Storms or spring runoff from nearby mountains can send deadly walls of water through ravines or along low desert gullies. The rocky ground sheds water instead of absorbing it, sending a torrent into lower elevations. A flash flood raises the water level by 1d10+10 feet within a matter of minutes. Water washes through affected squares like rapids. A flash flood passes through an area in 3d4 hours.

Along with the hazards of flowing water, the flow uproots trees and rolls enormous boulders with deadly force. Creatures struck by the initial wall of water during a flash flood must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save or take 3d6 points of bludgeoning damage.

WILDFIRES

In areas of dry vegetation, wildfires can result from careless use of flame or lightning strikes. The leading edge of a fire (the downwind side) advances 120 feet per round in moderate winds. Once a particular area is ablaze, it remains so for 2d4×10 minutes before dying to a smoking smolder.

A fire can be spotted from as far away as 2d6×100 feet by a creature that makes a Spot check with a +16 bonus due to the fire's size and light. The fire moves closer each round, and creatures readily see it when it closes to half the original distance. Creatures that are blinded or otherwise unable to make Spot checks can feel the fire when it's 100 feet away.

WILDFIRE EFFECTS

Unearthly heat pervades the area of a wildfire, and the threat of catching on fire is present. Wildfires produce thick smoke (see page 103), subjecting creatures to visibility impairment and smoke inhalation.

Ambient Heat

When they are exposed to the ambient heat from a wildfire, unprotected creatures (protection level 1 or lower; see page 156 for details on levels of protection) take 1d6 points of fire damage and 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per round (no save). A creature wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal is affected as if by a *heat metal* spell, which lasts as long as the creature remains in the area of the fire's ambient heat. A partially protected creature (protection level 2 or 3) takes damage once every 10 minutes. Protection level 4 or higher offers complete defense against a fire's ambient heat.

Catching on Fire

Those at risk of catching on fire are allowed a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid this fate. If a creature fails this save, it takes 1d6 points of fire damage. In each later round, the burning creature must make another Reflex save. Failure means it takes another 1d6 points of fire damage in that round. Success means the fire has gone out and deals no more damage.

A creature that is on fire can extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to soak itself. If no body of water is at hand, rolling on the ground or smothering the fire grants another save with a +4 bonus.

Those unlucky enough to have their clothes or equipment catch fire must make a DC 15 Reflex save for each item. On a failed save, the item takes the same amount of damage as a burning creature does.

Nonabilities

Some creatures don't have certain ability scores. These creatures don't have an ability score of 0—they lack the ability score altogether. The modifier for a nonability is +0. Other effects of nonabilities are detailed below.

STRENGTH

Any creature that can physically manipulate other objects has at least 1 point of Strength. A creature that has no Strength score can't exert force, usually because it has no physical body or because it doesn't move. The creature automatically fails Strength checks. If the creature can attack, it applies its Dexterity modifier to its base attack bonus instead of a Strength modifier.

DEXTERITY

Any creature that can move has at least 1 point of Dexterity. A creature that has no Dexterity score can't move. If it can perform actions (such as casting spells), it applies its Intelligence modifier to initiative checks instead of its Dexterity modifier. The creature automatically fails Reflex saves and Dexterity checks.

CONSTITUTION

Any living creature (any creature not of the construct, deathless, or undead type) has at least 1 point of Constitution. A creature that has no Constitution has no body or no metabolism. It's immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless the effect works on objects or is harmless. The creature is also immune to ability damage, ability drain, and energy drain, and automatically fails Constitution checks. A creature that has no Constitution can't tire and is thusly immune to fatigue and exhaustion. It uses its Charisma score as the basis for Concentration checks.

INTELLIGENCE

Any creature that can think, learn, or remember has at least 1 point of Intelligence. A creature that has no Intelligence score is mindless, an automaton operating on simple instincts or programmed instructions. Such a creature is immune to mind-affecting spells and abilities, and it automatically fails Intelligence checks.

Mindless creatures don't gain feats and skills, although they can have bonus feats or racial skill modifiers.

WISDOM

Any creature that can perceive its environment in any fashion has at least 1 point of Wisdom. Anything with no Wisdom score is an object, not a creature. Only objects have no Wisdom score, and an object that has no Wisdom score also has no Charisma score.

CHARISMA

Any creature capable of telling the difference between itself and other creatures and objects has at least 1 point of Charisma. Only objects have no Charisma score, and an object that has no Charisma score also has no Wisdom score.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

Objects

When attempting to break an object, you can attack it with a weapon or break it with sheer strength.

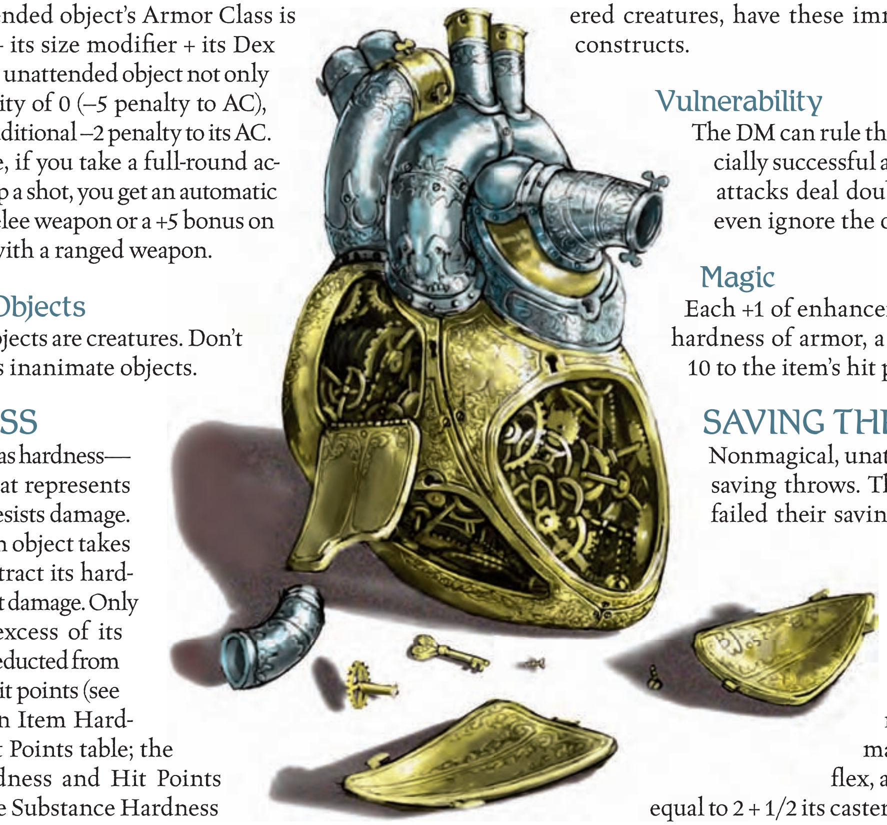
ATTACKING OBJECTS

The sunder attack (see page 142) allows you to smash a weapon or shield using a slashing or bludgeoning weapon. Smashing another carried, worn, or unattended object is like sundering, except that your attack roll is opposed by the object's AC instead of another attack roll.

ARMOR CLASS

A carried or worn object's AC is equal to 10 + its size modifier + the Dex modifier of the carrying or wearing creature. Attacking a carried or worn object provokes an attack of opportunity from the wearer.

An unattended object's Armor Class is equal to 10 + its size modifier + its Dex modifier. An unattended object not only has a Dexterity of 0 (–5 penalty to AC), but also an additional –2 penalty to its AC. Furthermore, if you take a full-round action to line up a shot, you get an automatic hit with a melee weapon or a +5 bonus on attack rolls with a ranged weapon.



Illus. by B. Wooten

Animated Objects

Animated objects are creatures. Don't treat them as inanimate objects.

HARDNESS

Each object has hardness—a number that represents how well it resists damage. Whenever an object takes damage, subtract its hardness from that damage. Only damage in excess of its hardness is deducted from the object's hit points (see the Common Item Hardness and Hit Points table; the Object Hardness and Hit Points table; and the Substance Hardness and Hit Points table).

HIT POINTS

An object's hit point total depends on what it's made of and how big it is (see the tables). Very large objects can have separate hit point totals for different sections.

Damaged Objects

A damaged object remains fully functional until its hit points are reduced to 0, at which point it is destroyed. Damaged objects can be repaired with the Craft skill (*PH* 70).

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

When damaging objects, a few special considerations might apply. In all cases, divide or multiply the damage dealt before applying the object's hardness.

Energy

Acid and sonic attacks deal damage to most objects just as they do to creatures. Electricity and fire attacks deal half damage to most objects. Cold attacks deal one-quarter damage to most objects.

Ranged Weapon Damage

Objects take half damage from ranged weapons, unless the weapon is a siege engine.

Ineffective Weapons

The DM can rule that certain weapons just can't effectively deal damage to certain objects.

Immunities

Objects are immune to nonlethal damage and to critical hits. Even animated objects, which are otherwise considered creatures, have these immunities because they're constructs.

Vulnerability

The DM can rule that certain attacks are especially successful against some objects. Such attacks deal double damage. Some might even ignore the object's hardness.

Magic

Each +1 of enhancement bonus adds 2 to the hardness of armor, a weapon, or a shield, and 10 to the item's hit points.

SAVING THROWS

Nonmagical, unattended items never make saving throws. They're considered to have failed their saving throws. An item being grasped, touched, or worn (attended) by a creature makes saving throws using that creature's saving throw bonus.

Magic items always receive saving throws. A magic item's Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save bonuses are equal to 2 + 1/2 its caster level. An attended magic item either makes saving throws as its owner, or it uses its own saving throw bonus, whichever is higher.

DISGUISING OBJECTS

You can use Disguise to temporarily change the appearance of an object, so that it isn't evident what the object is. This use of the skill requires time and materials to dress up the object. The DM makes the Disguise check secretly.

TIME TO DISGUISE AN OBJECT

Size of Object	Time Required
Tiny or smaller	1d6×5 minutes
Small to Large	1d8×10 minutes
Huge or larger	1d10×20 minutes

The object's disguise can't include an apparent change of size or weight of more than one-tenth the original unless specially crafted accessories are used (requiring a separate Craft check). Your Disguise check result is opposed by the Search checks of anyone looking at the item or otherwise searching the area where the object is located.

COMMON ITEM HARDNESS AND HIT POINTS

Item	Hardness	hp[1]
Light blade	10	2
One-handed blade	10	5
Two-handed blade	10	10
Light metal-hafted weapon	10	10
One-handed metal-hafted weapon	10	20
Light hafted weapon	5	2
One-handed hafted weapon	5	5
Two-handed hafted weapon	5	10
Projectile weapon	5	5
Potion vial	1	1
Ring	10	2
Rod	10	10
Scroll	0	1
Staff	5	10
Wand	5	5
Armor[2, 3]	—see notes—	
Buckler	10	5
Light wooden shield	5	7
Heavy wooden shield	5	15
Light steel shield	10	10
Heavy steel shield	10	20
Tower shield	5	20

1 The hit point value given is for Medium armor, weapons, and shields. Divide by 2 for each size category the item is smaller than Medium, or multiply by 2 for each size category the item is larger than Medium.
2 Armor has hit points equal to its armor bonus × 5.
3 Hardness varies by material; see the Substance Hardness and Hit Points table.

OBJECT HARDNESS AND HIT POINTS

Object	Hardness	hp
Rope (1 inch diam.)	0	2
Small chest	5	1
Treasure chest	5	15
Chain	10	5
Manacles	10	10
Masterwork manacles	10	10
Hinge	10	30
Lock	15	30
Doors		
Simple wooden door (1 in. thick)	5	10
Good wooden door (1-1/2 in. thick)	5	15
Strong wooden door (2 in. thick)	5	20
Stone door (4 in. thick)	8	60
Iron door (2 in. thick)	10	60
Ice door (1-1/2 ft. thick)	0	54
Glass door (6 in. thick)	1	6

SUBSTANCE HARDNESS AND HIT POINTS

Substance	Hardness	hp[1]
Paper or cloth	0	2
Rope	0	2
Glass	1	1
Ice	0	3
Leather or hide	2	5
Wood	5	10
Stone	8	15
Iron or steel	10	30
Mithral	15	30
Adamantine	20	40

1 Hit points are per inch of thickness

SIZE AND ARMOR CLASS OF OBJECTS

Size (Example)	AC Modifier
Colossal (broad side of a barn)	–8
Gargantuan (narrow side of a barn)	–4
Huge (wagon)	–2
Large (big door)	–1
Medium (barrel)	+0
Small (chair)	+1
Tiny (book)	+2
Diminutive (scroll)	+4
Fine (potion)	+8

BREAKING OBJECTS

When a creature tries to break something with sudden force rather than by dealing damage, use a Strength check (including a modifier due to size) to see whether it succeeds. The DC depends more on the construction of the item than on the material.

BREAKING ITEMS

Task	DC
Bend iron bars	24
Break down simple wooden door	13
Break down good wooden door	18
Break down glass door	18
Break down strong wooden door	23
Break down ice door	25
Break down door barred with wood	25
Break down door barred with iron	25
Break down iron or stone door	28
Break open a small chest	17
Break open a treasure chest	23
Burst a strand of rope[1]	23
Burst chain	26
Burst manacles	26
Burst masterwork manacles	28

Condition	DC Modifier
Item at 1/2 hit points	–2
Hold portal[2]	+5
Arcane lock[2]	+10

1 If a creature is bound with the rope, add the binder's Use Rope check result to this DC.
2 If more than one of these conditions applies, use the larger number.

Overrun

You can attempt an overrun as a standard action taken during your movement. This is an exception to the rule that you can't take a standard action during movement. With an overrun, you attempt to plow past or over a defender and move through that creature's space as you move. You can overrun a defender who is one size category larger than you or smaller. You can make only one overrun attempt per round.

INITIATING AN OVERRUN

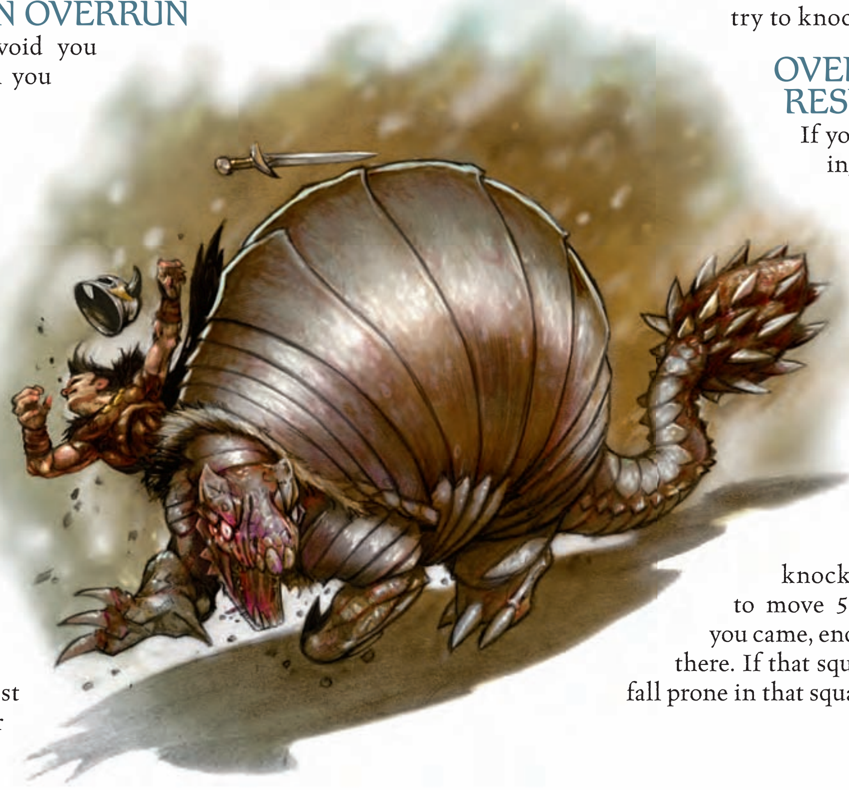
You begin the overrun by moving into the defender's space, so you provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender. You also provoke attacks of opportunity as normal for your movement.

RESOLVING AN OVERRUN

A defender can avoid you or block you when you overrun.

Defender Avoids

If the defender avoids you, it doesn't suffer any ill effect, and you can keep moving, since you can always move through a square occupied by someone who lets you by. The overrun doesn't cost a standard action, but the movement required to enter the defender's space counts against your movement for the round.



Illus. by M. Cotie

Defender Blocks

If the defender blocks you, make a Strength check opposed by the defender's Dexterity or Strength check—whichever ability score has the higher modifier. A combatant gets a +4 bonus on the check for every size category it is larger than Medium or a –4 penalty for every size category it is smaller than Medium. The defender gets a +4 bonus on the check if it has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid. If you win, you knock the defender prone. It must use a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity to stand up again. If you lose, the defender can immediately react and make a Strength check opposed by your Dexterity or Strength check—including the size modifiers noted above, but no other modifiers—to try to knock you prone.

OVERRUN RESULTS

If you succeed in knocking the defender prone, you can continue your movement as normal. If you fail and are knocked prone in turn, you have to move 5 feet back the way you came and fall prone, ending your movement there. If you fail but aren't knocked prone, you have to move 5 feet back the way you came, ending your movement there. If that square is occupied, you fall prone in that square.

OVERRUN WITH CONFIDENCE

Overrun is actually an extremely effective tactic for a Medium character to use against smaller opponents such as goblins or kobolds, especially if getting past such foes is more important than fighting them. Overrun can be effective for moving in and among weaker foes as well, setting you up for using Cleave or Great Cleave. A strong monster might want to use overrun to get at the wizard or archer who dealt a lot of damage last round.

Many players have an irrational fear of provoking attacks of opportunity from weak foes. Obviously, you don't want to give a powerful creature more swings at you—but if you're dealing with a skirmish line of low-level goblin warriors that can hit you only on a high attack roll, you shouldn't be afraid to provoke attacks of opportunity. In other words, if you have a high AC and you're fighting enemies you outclass, don't let the attack of opportunity stop you from trying an overrun (or any other option that provokes attacks of opportunity, for that matter).

But remember, you should weigh the odds of a successful overrun. If your Strength check modifier (including size modifier) is 10 better than your enemy's, you win about 88% of the time. If you're a Medium character who has an 18 Strength, you have a check modifier of +4. A Small creature that has a 12 Dexterity—for example, a goblin warrior—has a check modifier of –3. If that goblin is smart, he'll just get out of the way.

If you think you might be interested in using this tactic, take the Improved Overrun feat. Not only does your enemy lose the ability to just avoid you, but you also gain a +4 bonus on your Strength checks to win the overrun!

—Rich Baker, designer

Poison

All sorts of toxins exist in nature and among monsters. Although supernatural and spell-like poisons are possible, poison is almost always extraordinary.

DAMAGE FROM POISON

When a creature takes damage from an attack that delivers poison, it must make a Fortitude saving throw against a DC specified for the poison. If the save fails, the creature takes the poison's initial damage. Even if the save succeeds, the poison has the potential to deal its secondary damage 1 minute later, which the poisoned creature can avoid with another successful Fortitude saving throw.

In poison descriptions, initial and secondary damage is usually identified. Some monster entries divide initial and secondary damage by a slash (/)—initial damage comes before the slash, and secondary damage after.

Each instance of poisoning damages a poisoned creature separately. In the case of poisons that have nondamaging effects, those effects don't stack, but each one runs for its full duration.

POISON EFFECTIVENESS

One dose of poison smeared on a weapon or some other object affects just a single target. The size of the object the poison is applied to doesn't matter. A poisoned weapon or object retains its venom until the weapon scores a hit or the object is touched. Any poison smeared on an object or exposed to the elements in any way remains potent until it's touched or used. Poison can be wiped off an object.

POISON TYPES

Poisons are divided into four types, according to the method by which their effect is delivered.

Contact

Merely touching this type of poison necessitates a saving throw. A weapon attack or a touch attack can actively deliver it. Even if a creature has sufficient damage reduction to avoid taking any damage from the attack, the poison can still affect it. An object can be smeared with contact poison as part of a trap.

Ingested

Ingested poisons are virtually impossible to utilize in a combat situation. One could administer a poison to an unconscious creature, or dupe someone into drinking or eating something poisoned. Assassins and other characters use ingested poisons outside combat.

Inhaled

Inhaled poisons are usually contained in fragile containers. They can be thrown as a ranged attack with a range increment of 10 feet. When the container strikes a hard surface (or is struck hard), it releases its poison. One dose spreads to fill the volume of a 10-foot cube. Each creature within the area must make a saving throw. Holding one's breath is ineffective against inhaled poisons; they affect the nasal membranes, tear ducts, and other parts of the body.

Injury

This type of poison must be delivered through a wound. If a creature has sufficient damage reduction to avoid taking any damage from the attack, the poison doesn't affect it. Traps that cause damage from weapons, needles, and the like sometimes contain injury poisons.

BUYING POISON

Many poisons are sold in doses, with a cost in gold pieces given for each dose. It isn't possible to use or apply poison in any quantity smaller than one dose. The purchase and possession of poison is always illegal, and even in big cities it can be obtained only from illicit sources.

PERILS OF USING POISON

Unless otherwise noted, a creature has a 5% chance of exposing itself to a poison whenever it applies that poison to a weapon or otherwise readies the poison for use. Additionally, a creature that rolls a natural 1 on an attack roll with a poisoned weapon must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save or accidentally poison itself with the weapon. Neither form of accidental exposure uses up a dose of poison, whether it's on a weapon or not.

TREATING POISON

Someone can use the Heal skill to tend a single creature that is going to take more damage or suffer some other effect from being poisoned. Every time the poisoned creature makes a saving throw against the poison, the healer makes a Heal check. The poisoned creature uses the Heal check result or a saving throw result, whichever is higher.

POISON IMMUNITIES

A creature that has a natural poison special attack is immune to its own poison and the poison of others of its kind. Other creatures can be immune to poison according to their description or type.

POISONOUS SIMULATION

In earlier editions of D&D, poison killed you outright or had a chance to kill you or deal you a lot of damage—even on a successful saving throw. In D&D's 3rd Edition, poison became a subtler, scarier effect. It dealt ability damage, of which only half was likely to affect a victim during a particular battle.

The idea to split up poison's full effect grew out of the desire to model how a real-world poison works. Poison isn't an all-or-nothing spike. It's something you worry about the whole time it's around. "Hey, I feel sick—I think I've been poisoned!"

As a player who enjoys rogue characters, I've noticed I've become less and less interested in using poison. Why? Because poison in the hands of a player character plays differently than poison from a monster. When a PC poisons an opponent during a fight, the fight often concludes before the second part of the poison has a chance to affect that foe. So poison is really only half as effective for a player character. Ouch.

—Bruce R. Cordell, designer

Illus. by S. Prescott

Ready

Ready lets you prepare to take an action later, after your turn is over but before your next one has begun.

HOW TO READY

Readying is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, though the action that you ready might provoke attacks of opportunity when you take that action.

You can ready a standard action, a move action, a swift action, or a free action. To do so, you must specify what you want to do and the conditions under which you will do so. Then, any time before your next turn, you can take the readied action in response to those conditions. The action occurs just before whatever triggers it. If the triggering condition is part of another creature's activities, you interrupt that creature's turn. Assuming the interrupted creature is still capable of doing so, it continues its turn once you complete your readied action.

Movement and Readying

You can take a 5-foot step as part of your readied action, but only if you don't otherwise move any distance during the round.

CONSEQUENCES OF READYING

When you take your readied action, your new initiative count changes to the one on which you acted. You act immediately before any creature whose activities triggered your readied action. Your initiative count is lower for the rest of the combat if you acted later in the same round during which you decided to ready. If you take your readied action in the round after the one during which you chose to ready, but before your original initiative count comes up, your initiative count rises to the one on which you acted for the rest of the combat. You don't get the turn that would have occurred on your original initiative count.

READY WISELY

If delay is about waiting for circumstances to determine your action, ready is about choosing the circumstances that trigger your action. But what if that circumstance doesn't happen?

Think of a ready action like a basic computer program: if this happens, then this occurs. As anyone who works with computers knows, the "garbage in, garbage out" rule always applies. If you're not specific enough with your proposed ready action, then your result might not be exactly what you hoped for. And if you're too specific, the condition might not be met and you've lost a round's worth of actions.

Use ready sparingly, only when you're certain that the triggering event will occur and that you're willing to follow through on your readied action. If you're not absolutely sure that the orc shaman you're talking to is just waiting for the rest of his tribe to show up, maybe it's best not to ready an attack until you're certain about his intentions.

But if you are, and you're willing to take the consequences, ready away!

—Michele Carter, editor

Abstraction or Simulation

by Andy Collins, developer

One of the great strengths of tabletop roleplaying games is that they allow characters to attempt anything the players can imagine. The open-ended nature of most RPGs, and the presence of a living arbiter (the DM), allow for a range of actions far beyond what any board game, card game, or computer game can handle.

Ironically, the place where many RPG systems break down is when they attempt to simulate actions and aspects of the "real world." Although a certain level of believability must be achieved, many designers and players strive for a level of simulation far beyond what's necessary to for a game.

Is it "realistic" that every player in Monopoly starts with exactly the same amount of money, that players have a 1-in-6 chance of being released from Jail each turn they're incarcerated, or that a shoe can amass property and collect rental payments? Of course not, but nobody playing Monopoly complains about such things. Everyone accepts a certain level of abstraction for fun game play.

Every edition of D&D has struggled to find the right balance between simulation and abstraction that achieves maximum playability and fun. Overall, the game leans more heavily toward abstraction, and that's not an accident. Not only does the game focus on elements way beyond the realms of reality, but it also consciously requires the characters to perform heroic, even superheroic, actions.

The important caveat to any abstract system is that even an abstracted activity must be acceptably believable to the players. That is, the participants in the game must believe that the in-game outcome could have occurred in the situation in question.

That "believability factor" is relative, not absolute. It varies based on the core assumptions of the game, the setting, and even the playing group. What's believable in one game might not be in another. Casually leaping 20 feet from a standing start sounds unbelievable . . . unless you're playing a wuxia-influenced game. In that case, it's pedestrian. A group of expert climbers might demand more simulationist aspects in a climbing system, because their advanced expertise doesn't allow them to "believe" in the outcomes that result from the rules.

That's the same reason why many doctors can't enjoy medical dramas on TV. Although the average viewer can accept and enjoy week after week of bizarre cases and way-out-there diagnoses, it's so far removed from the professional's real-life experiences and expertise that she just can't bring herself to believe the show enough to appreciate the entertainment value. I can only imagine how "unrealistic" a show on game designers would seem to me and the folks I work with.

It's tempting to look at a rule and imagine how to make it more realistic. Whenever this temptation rears its ugly head, just ask yourself if the added realism actually increases smooth, fun game play. The answer is usually "No"—just like a "realistic" cop or doctor show would be pretty boring to watch. (Oh, goody, another episode of paperwork!)

In D&D, halflings are almost as strong as humans. In a realistic game, these pint-size characters would have the muscle of a 10-year-old. Of course, then they'd be unable to do much in combat. Instead, D&D abstracts the difference between the two races, pushing them closer together to ensure that halflings are playable. They're still weaker than humans—that's the believability factor—but not so much weaker as to be unplayable.

In D&D, characters bounce back from injuries with no real consequences. In a realistic game, a character who actually manages to survive being clawed, gnawed, and flash-fried by a red dragon as big as a house would be in a hospital for weeks, and (assuming he could still walk at all) would walk with a limp for the rest of his life. Of course, that makes it a little hard to continue the adventure, so D&D abstracts character injuries and recovery with the hit point system. Massive injuries can certainly kill even a powerful character, and coming back from death takes its toll. That's the believability factor. But virtually any injury can be repaired relatively quickly if you have the right resources, which allows the game to keep rolling.

Players carry out melee combats by rolling dice and moving minis around a grid on a turn-by-turn basis in D&D. In a realistic game, combat would be incredibly chaotic and uncontrolled, with many more interruptions and missteps, and a lot less finesse. Of course, that would make combat scenes drag on forever, result in a lot of wasted actions, and encourage endless timing arguments. Instead, D&D encourages players to recreate their favorite action movie stunts (or create their own) within a fast-paced combat system by minimizing the number of variables and actions they have to track. It keeps order by having each participant take turns. This system sacrifices many elements of simulation in order to achieve the desired level of playability, but the resulting action remains reasonable enough to pass the average player's believability test.

Put simply, no game can perfectly simulate reality. If it did, it wouldn't be a game any more, it'd be real life. (Who wants to buy a copy of that?) It might be more realistic for Monopoly players to start with different amounts of money, but that wouldn't make the game more fun. If D&D perfectly simulated battling a horde of raging barbarians, it would not only cost a lot more money to purchase (those actors don't come cheap), it would result in a lot more lawsuits.

Abstraction is the game player's (and game designer's) best friend. It lets us recreate an endless array of activities we'd never be able to (or want to) accomplish in real life. What's more, it lets us do so quickly and efficiently, maximizing the play and minimizing the rule-searching. When it's done right, abstraction actually improves our immersion into the game's own version of reality. Actions within the game flow so naturally and intuitively that we forget that we're bounded by rules at all.

Personally, I can't think of any greater achievement in game design.

Saving Throws

When you're subjected to an unusual or magical attack, you make a saving throw (or save) to avoid or reduce the effect. Like an attack roll, a saving throw is a d20 roll plus modifiers from several possible factors.

Saving throw bonus = base save bonus + ability modifier + racial bonus + resistance bonus + other modifiers

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

If the result of the saving throw roll equals or exceeds the save's DC, the saving throw succeeds. The DC for a save is determined by the attack. A creature that successfully saves against an effect that has no obvious physical repercussions feels a hostile force or a tingle, but can't deduce the exact nature of the attack. Likewise, if a creature's saving throw succeeds against a targeted effect, the effect's creator senses that the effect has failed. A caster can't sense when creatures succeed on saves against effect spells or area spells, or against similar abilities.

AUTOMATIC FAILURE AND SUCCESS

A natural 1 (the d20 comes up 1) on a saving throw is always a failure, and the attack that forced the save might cause damage to exposed items—see Items Surviving, below. A natural 20 (the d20 comes up 20) is always a success.

VOLUNTARILY FAILING

A creature can voluntarily forego a saving throw and willingly accept a consequence.

ITEMS SURVIVING

Unless the descriptive text for an effect specifies otherwise, all items carried or worn by a creature are assumed to survive a magical attack. If a creature rolls a natural 1 on its saving throw against the effect, however, an exposed item is harmed if the attack can harm objects. Refer to the following table. Determine which four objects carried or worn by the creature are most likely to be affected and roll randomly among them. The randomly determined item must make a saving throw against the attack form and, if the save fails, take whatever damage the attack deals.

If an item isn't carried or worn, and isn't magical, it doesn't get a saving throw. It simply takes the appropriate damage.

Items Affected by Magical Attacks

Order[1]	Item
1st	Shield
2nd	Armor
3rd	Magic helmet, hat, or headband
4th	Item in hand (including weapon, wand, or the like)
5th	Magic cloak
6th	Stowed or sheathed weapon
7th	Magic bracers
8th	Magic clothing
9th	Magic jewelry (including rings)
10th	Anything else

[1] In order from most likely to least likely to be affected.

SAVING THROW TYPES

The three different kinds of saving throws are Fortitude, Reflex, and Will.

Fortitude

Fortitude saves reflect physical toughness. They incorporate stamina, ruggedness, physique, bulk, metabolism, resistance, immunity, and other similar physical qualities. If an effect seems like something that a tough person would be good at avoiding, it's a Fortitude save. Apply your Constitution modifier to your Fortitude saving throws.

Illus. by C. Dulac, UDON & J. Zubkavich

Reflex

Reflex saves reflect physical (and sometimes mental) agility. They incorporate quickness, nimbleness, hand-eye coordination, overall coordination, speed, and reaction time. If an effect seems like something that an agile person would be good at avoiding, it's a Reflex save. Apply your Dexterity modifier to your Reflex saving throws.

You can make a Reflex save whenever one is called for, but your Dexterity or whether you can apply its modifier might be altered by the situation.

Will

Will saves reflect inner strength. They incorporate willpower, mental stability, the power of the mind, levelheadedness, determination, self-confidence, self-awareness, the superego, and resistance to temptation. If an effect seems like something that a confident or determined person would be good at avoiding, it's a Will save. Apply your Wisdom modifier to your Will saving throws.

AGAINST MAGIC ITEMS

Most magic item descriptions give saving throw DCs for the item's various effects. If not, the DC can be derived from this formula:

Magic item saving throw DC = 10 + (1-1/2 × the level of the spell or effect)

Staffs and runestaffs (see *Magic Item Compendium* 223) are exceptions to this rule. Treat the saving throw DCs for these items as if the wielder had cast the spell, including caster level and all modifiers to the save DC.

AGAINST SPECIAL ATTACKS

Some creatures have special abilities that require saving throws to resist. Any sort of special ability—extraordinary, spell-like, or supernatural, might allow a saving throw.

Special ability saving throw DC = 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the modifier for the ability score on which the ability is based + other modifiers (often racial)

Spell-like abilities are an exception to this general rule.

Spell-like ability saving throw DC = 10 + the level of the spell the ability resembles or duplicates + the creature's Cha modifier + other modifiers (often racial)

Spell level is usually equal to the level of the sorcerer/wizard version of a spell. If the spell has no such version, use the version that makes the most sense for the creature.

AGAINST SPELLS

The Saving Throw line in a spell description defines which type of saving throw the spell allows and describes how saving throws against the spell work.

Spell saving throw DC = 10 + the level of the spell + the bonus for the spellcaster's relevant ability score

A spell's level can vary depending on your class. Always use the spell level applicable to your class. The relevant ability score varies by spellcasting class.

TERMS FOR SAVES

Specific terms further define how a save works, and these terms are commonly used in spell descriptions, class features, and monster special abilities. Those terms include the following.

Negates: The effect has no consequences for a subject that makes a successful saving throw.

Partial: The effect has consequences. A successful saving throw means that those consequences are diminished as detailed in the spell or ability description.

Half: The effect deals damage, and a successful saving throw halves that damage.

None: No saving throw is allowed.

Disbelief: A successful save lets the subject ignore the effect.

(object): The effect can be used on objects, which receive saving throws only if they're magical or if they're attended by a creature resisting the effect, in which case the object uses the creature's saving throw bonus unless its own bonus is greater. A magic item's saving throw bonuses are each equal to 2 + 1/2 the item's caster level.

This notation doesn't mean that an effect can be used only on objects. Some effects of this sort can be cast on creatures and/or objects.

(harmless): The effect is usually beneficial, but a targeted creature can attempt a saving throw if it desires.

SPECIAL SAVE ABILITIES

Special abilities can affect the results of a saving throw. The most common special abilities of this type are evasion, improved evasion, and mettle.

Evasion and Improved Evasion

Evasion and improved evasion allow the target of an area attack to leap or twist out of the way. If a creature that has evasion is subjected to an attack that allows a Reflex save for half damage, it takes no damage on a successful save. Improved evasion is like evasion, except that even on a failed saving throw a creature that has improved evasion takes only half damage. A creature must have room to move to evade. A bound creature or one squeezing through an area can't use evasion.

Evasion and improved evasion are reflexive abilities. A creature that has one of these abilities need not know that the attack is coming to use the ability.

Sometimes a creature that has evasion or improved evasion can't use the ability while wearing medium or heavy armor. This is true only if the ability's description says so.

Mettle

Mettle is an ability that allows a creature to shrug off magical effects that are reduced in efficacy when the subject makes a successful Will or Fortitude saving throw, such as any spell with a saving throw entry of Will partial or Fortitude half. By making a successful saving throw, a creature that has mettle instead negates such an effect. An unconscious or sleeping creature doesn't gain the benefit of mettle.

Senses

Most creatures can see and hear using the skills Listen and Spot, and they can focus their attention by using Search. Other senses also come into play from time to time.

LISTEN (WIS)

Every time a creature has a chance to hear something, that creature can make a Listen check without using an action. Trying to hear something one failed to hear previously is a move action. A Listen check is either made against a DC that reflects how quiet the noise is, or it is opposed by another creature's Move Silently check.

A successful Listen check allows you to tell the general location of or direction to the sound. If understanding the actual content of a sound is important, beating the DC by 10 allows you to do so, assuming you can otherwise understand that content. Beating the DC by 20 allows you to pinpoint where a sound is coming from.

Listen

Sound	DC
A battle	–10
People talking	0
People whispering	15

Condition	DC Modifier
Ambient noise	+5
Loud ambient noise	+10
Extremely loud ambient noise	+15
Through a door	+5
Through a stone wall	+15
Per 10 feet of distance[1]	+1
Per 20 feet of distance over water[1]	+1
Per 30 feet of distance underwater[1]	+1
Listener distracted	+5
Listener sleeping[2]	+10
Land creature underwater[3]	+10

[1] Pick one of these that most applies.
[2] A successful check awakens the listener.
[3] Nonaquatic creatures without natural swim speed.

SPOT (WIS)

Every time a creature has a chance to see something, that creature can make a Spot check without using an action. Trying to spot something one failed to see previously is a move action. A Spot check is either made against a DC that reflects how hard something is to see, or it is opposed by another creature's Hide check. A creature must have line of sight to make a Spot check.

Spot

Condition	Check Penalty
Per 10 feet of distance	–1
Spotter distracted	–5

OTHER USES

Spot is also used to detect a disguise (opposed by a Disguise check) and to read lips.

Read Lips

To understand what someone is saying by reading lips, a lip reader must be within 30 feet of the speaker, have line of sight to that creature, do nothing other than move at half speed, and understand the speaker's language. The base DC is 15, but it increases for complex speech or an inarticulate speaker. The DM makes the check in secret. If the Spot check succeeds, the lip reader can understand the general content of a minute's worth of speaking, but might miss certain details. If the check fails by 4 or less, the lip reader can't make out what's said. If the check fails by 5 or more, the lip reader draws an incorrect conclusion about the speech.

SEARCH (INT)

The Search skill lets a creature discern something through active effort. A searcher must be within 10 feet of the object or surface to be searched. It takes a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity to search a 5-foot-by-5-foot area or a volume of goods 5 feet on a side. The following table gives DCs for typical tasks involving the Search skill.

Search

Task	DC
Search a full chest to find an item	10
Notice a secret door or a simple trap	20
Find a difficult nonmagical trap[1]	21 or higher
Find a magic trap[1]	25 + level of spell
Notice a well-hidden secret door	30
Find a footprint	Varies[2]

[1] Only a creature that has trapfinding can perform this sort of Search check and succeed.
[2] A successful check can find a sign of a creature's passage but doesn't let you find or follow a trail. See Track, page 144.

MAKING SENSE(S)

The senses that appear here aren't the only game in town. Woodsense (greenvise) showed up in *Monster Manual II* and keen scent (dragon eel), psychic sense (runehound), and wavesense (swamp strider swarm) in *Monster Manual III*. Most of these were modified versions of the "glossary senses."

The newest statistics block format has a "senses" entry, and *Monster Manual IV* made full use of it. Dweomersight lets the balhannoth lock on to those tasty magic items, and the mage-ripper swarm's sense magic does the same while also tracking down spellcasters. The joystealer's sense emotions ability is—unless you're undead—even better at catching you than tremorsense.

—Logan Bonner, editor

OTHER SENSES

If it becomes important whether a creature actually senses something specific when smelling, tasting, or touching, a Wisdom check suffices. Set the DC reasonably based on the sensation's strength. Knowledge checks or Appraise checks might be appropriate supplements to senses, depending on what a creature is trying to find out.

EXTRAORDINARY SENSES

Some creatures have senses that are extraordinary abilities.

BLINDSIGHT

Even if a creature that has blindsight is blind, it maneuvers and fights as well as a sighted creature. The range of a creature's blindsight is specified in the creature's descriptive text.

Invisibility, darkness, and most kinds of concealment are irrelevant to a creature that has blindsight, though the creature must have line of effect to a creature or object to discern that creature or object. A creature that has blindsight usually doesn't need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice and locate creatures within range of its blindsight ability. Blindsight doesn't subject a creature to gaze attacks.

Blindsight doesn't distinguish color or visual contrast. A creature can't read using blindsight. Blinding attacks don't work on creatures using blindsight. Deafening attacks thwart blindsight if the blindsight relies on hearing. Blindsight works underwater but not in a vacuum.

Unless otherwise noted, blindsight is continuous, and the creature need do nothing to use it. Some forms of blindsight, however, must be triggered as a free action. If a creature must trigger its blindsight ability, the creature gains the benefit of blindsight only during its turn.

BLINDSENSE

A creature that has blindsense notices creatures and objects it can't see, but without the precision of blindsight. The range of a creature's blindsense is specified in the creature's descriptive text. A creature that has blindsense usually doesn't need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice and locate creatures within range of its blindsense ability, provided that it has line of effect to such creatures. Any opponent the creature can't see still has total concealment against a creature relying on blindsense, and the blindsensing creature still has the normal miss chance when attacking foes that have concealment. Conditions that affect visibility still affect the movement of a creature that has blindsense. A creature that has blindsense is still denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class against attacks from creatures it can't see.

DARKVISION

Darkvision is the ability to see with no light source at all, out to a range specified for the creature. A creature using darkvision can't discern colors. The presence of light doesn't spoil darkvision.

Darkvision doesn't allow creatures to see anything that they couldn't see otherwise. Likewise, darkvision subjects a creature to gaze attacks normally.

LOW-LIGHT VISION

Creatures that have low-light vision can see twice as far as normal in dim light. Low-light vision allows a creature that can read to do so with even the tiniest source of light. Those that have low-light vision can see outdoors on a moonlit night as well as a human can during the day.

Superior low-light vision allows a creature to see even farther in conditions of shadowy illumination, usually four times as far as normal.

SCENT

This ability lets a creature detect creatures and track by sense of smell. Creatures with the scent ability can identify familiar odors just as humans do familiar sights.

Detecting Creatures

A creature that has the scent ability can detect other creatures by sense of smell, usually within 30 feet. Upwind, the range is 60 feet. Downwind, the range is 15 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents, such as skunk musk or troglodyte stench, can be detected at three times these ranges.

A creature that has scent detects another creature's presence but not its specific location. Noting the direction of the scent is a move action. If a creature with scent moves within 5 feet of a scent's source, the creature can pinpoint that source.

Powerful odors can easily mask other scents. The presence of such an odor completely spoils the ability to properly detect or identify creatures.

Tracking by Smell

A creature that has the Track feat and the scent ability can follow tracks by smell. See Track, page 144.

TREMORSENSE

A creature that has tremorsense is sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything that is in contact with the ground within range and is not totally still. A creature that has tremorsense must also be in contact with the ground, and the creatures it's trying to sense must be taking physical actions, including casting spells with somatic components. Creatures don't have to move from place to place for a creature that has tremorsense to detect them.

If no direct path exists through the ground from the creature that has tremorsense to those it's sensing, then the ability's range defines the maximum distance of the shortest indirect path.

Aquatic creatures that have tremorsense can also sense the location of creatures moving through water, as long as the creature that has tremorsense is in contact with the same water.

Size

The nine size categories, in order from smallest to largest, are Fine, Diminutive, Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, Gargantuan, and Colossal. A creature's size provides a modifier to its Armor Class and attack bonus, on grapple checks, on Hide checks, and a modifier to break open doors. Size also determines how much space a creature takes up and how far it can reach, as well as how much a creature can carry.

SIZE AND COMBAT

Creatures smaller than Small or larger than Medium have special rules relating to position in combat.

LITTLE CREATURES

Tiny, Diminutive, and Fine creatures take up less than 1 square of space apiece. Twenty-five Diminutive creatures or 100 Fine creatures can fit into a single 5-foot square. A Tiny creature occupies a space 2-1/2 feet across, so four can fit into a single square.

Creatures that take up less than 1 square of space typically have a natural reach of 0 feet, meaning they can't reach into adjacent squares. They must enter an opponent's square to attack in melee. Doing this provokes an attack of opportunity from the opponent. You can attack into your own square if you need to, so you can attack such creatures normally. Since they have no natural reach, they don't threaten the squares around them. You can move past them without provoking attacks of opportunity. They also can't flank an enemy. A creature that has a reach of 0 feet still threatens the square it's in.

BIG CREATURES

Large, Huge, Gargantuan, and Colossal creatures take up more than 1 square of space. Creatures that take up more than 1 square typically have a natural reach of 10 feet or more, meaning that they can reach targets even if those targets aren't in adjacent squares.

Illus. by M. Cavotta

A creature that has more than 5 feet of natural reach threatens squares adjacent to it and all others within its reach. A creature with greater than normal natural reach usually gets an attack of opportunity against a Medium or smaller creature if such a creature approaches it, because that creature must enter and leave threatened squares to draw near.

Large or larger creatures using reach weapons can attack at up to double their natural reach, but they can't attack within their natural reach or less.

Creature Sizes

Size Category	AC/Attack Modifier	Grapple/Break Modifier	Hide Modifier	Carrying Capacity	Dimension[1]	Weight[2]	Space (squares)	Reach (Tall) (squares)	Reach (Long) (squares)
Fine	+8	–16	+16	×1/8	6 in.–	1/8 lb.–	1/2 ft. (1/100)	0 ft. (0)	—
Diminutive	+4	–12	+12	×1/4	to 1 ft.	to 1 lb.	1 ft. (1/25)	0 ft. (0)	—
Tiny	+2	–8	+8	×1/2	to 2 ft.	to 8 lb.	2-1/2 ft. (1/4)	0 ft. (0)	—
Small	+1	–4	+4	×3/4	to 4 ft.	to 60 lb.	5 ft. (1)	5 ft. (1)	—
Medium	+0	+0	+0	×1	to 8 ft.	to 500 lb.	5 ft. (1)	5 ft. (1)	5 ft. (1)
Large	–1	+4	–4	×2	to 16 ft.	to 2 tons	10 ft. (2×2)	10 ft. (2)	5 ft. (1)
Huge	–2	+8	–8	×4	to 32 ft.	to 16 tons	15 ft. (3×3)	15 ft. (3)	10 ft. (2)
Gargantuan	–4	+12	–12	×8	to 64 ft.	to 125 tons	20 ft. (4×4)	20 ft. (4)	15 ft. (3)
Colossal	–8	+16	–16	×16	64 ft.+	125+	30 ft.+ (6×6+)	30 ft.+ (6+)	20 ft.+ (4+)

[1] Biped's height, quadruped's body length (nose to base of tail).

[2] Assumes that the creature is roughly as dense as a regular animal.

CARRY A BIG STICK

As one of the folks who worked on *Races of Stone*, I became quickly enamored of goliaths, and I immediately petitioned my DM to let me roll up a goliath cleric. Over the course of several adventures, I realized just how good "being Large in all the good ways and none of the bad" was. Sure, it's all spelled out in the powerful build racial trait, but how often do you think being Large for the purpose of being swallowed whole will come up? All I saw, power gamer that I am, was "You can swing a BIG club!" But holding your own in a wrestling match with an ogre, resisting a hill giant's bull rush, and not getting tripped by that spiked chain wielder all made a much bigger difference to me—rare though those occurrences were—at the moments they happened. And these were the memorable moments in my character's life within the campaign, rather than the fact that I assaulted evildoers with a tree trunk.

—Chris Thomasson, editor

Sleight of Hand

If you're trained in Sleight of Hand, you can cut a purse and hide it on your person, palm an unattended object, hide a light weapon in your clothing, or perform some feat of legerdemain with an object no larger than a loaf of bread.

SLEIGHT OF HAND (DEX; TRAINED ONLY, ARMOR CHECK PENALTY)

The accompanying table delineates Sleight of Hand tasks and their DCs. Although Sleight of Hand is technically a "trained only" skill, if you have no ranks in it, you can make a Dexterity check to hide an object on your person or to perform any Sleight of Hand task that has a DC of 10 or lower. A Sleight of Hand check is normally a standard action.

When you use this skill under close observation, your skill check is opposed by the observer's Spot check. The observer's success doesn't prevent you from performing the act, but it keeps you from doing it unnoticed.

When you use Sleight of Hand to Hide an object on your person, your check is opposed by the Search check of anyone frisking you. In this case, the searcher gains a +4 bonus on the Search check—it's easier to find an object than to hide it on your person.

If you try to take something from another creature, you must succeed on a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check. The opponent makes a Spot check to detect the attempt, opposed by the same Sleight of Hand check result you achieved when you tried to take the item. An opponent who succeeds on this check notices the attempt, regardless of whether you got the item. The DM is free to limit what you can take in this manner—coin purses and tiny weapons are fair game, but securely worn items, such as *bracers of armor*, are not. If the creature you're taking something from knows you're trying to do so, it can resist, forcing you to use the disarm (page 45) or grapple (page 60) rules rather than these.

You can use Sleight of Hand to entertain as though you were using the Perform skill. In such a case, your act includes elements of legerdemain, juggling, and so on.

You can try Sleight of Hand checks again. After an initial failure, a second Sleight of Hand attempt against the same target (or while you're being watched by the same observer who noticed your previous attempt) increases the DC for the task by 10.

DAGGER SURPRISE

If you palm a dagger during a fight, you can surprise your opponent when the dagger suddenly appears in your hand. For this technique to work, you must have a dagger sheathed on your person, must have the Quick Draw feat, and must be holding nothing in your off hand. You must fight the same foe for at least 2 consecutive rounds to make your opponent used to the idea that you have nothing in your off hand. At the beginning of your turn during the third round, use Quick Draw to draw the sheathed dagger as a free action with your off hand. Then make a Sleight of Hand check opposed by your opponent's Spot check. If you win, your foe is considered flat-footed for the next single attack you make with the dagger now in your off hand. Regardless of your success, the same foe won't fall for the same trick from you twice during the same encounter.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

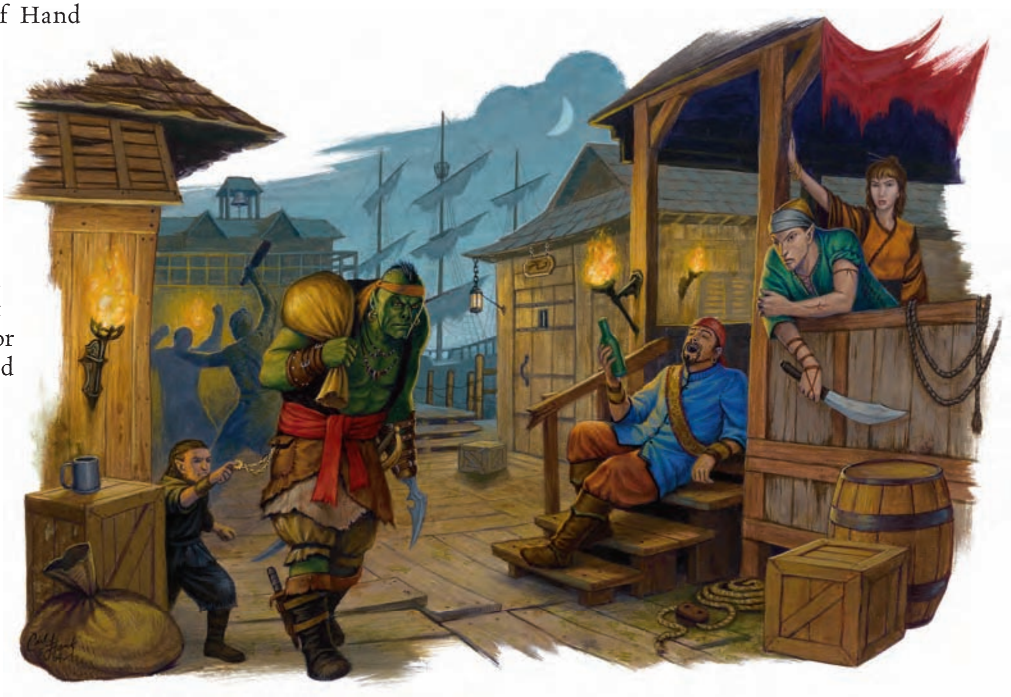
Task	DC
Palm a coin-sized object, make a coin disappear	10
Lift a small object from a creature	20
Any task while observed	Observer's Spot check
Hide an object on your person	Searcher's Search check +4

Condition	Check Modifier
Wearing baggy or heavy clothing (cloak)	+2
Object is a dagger	+2
Object is extraordinarily small (coin, ring, shuriken)	+4
Make check as a move action	–20

Condition	DC Modifier
Try again against same observer after failing	+10

UNOBTRUSIVE SPELLCASTING

As part of casting a spell, you can make a Sleight of Hand check to make your verbal and somatic components less obtrusive, muttering magic words under your breath and making magic gestures surreptitiously. Your Sleight of Hand check is opposed by any observer's Spot check. The observer's success doesn't prevent you from casting the spell, but it keeps you from doing it unnoticed.



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Special Abilities

Many creatures can use special abilities that aren't magical. These abilities are classified as extraordinary or natural. Some creatures can create magical effects without being spellcasters. Characters using particular class features can also create magical effects. These effects come in two types, spell-like and supernatural.

Using a special ability is often a standard action, but whether it's a standard action, a full-round action, or not an action at all is defined by the ability's description.

EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES

Extraordinary abilities aren't magical, though they might break the laws of physics. These abilities can't be disrupted in combat, as spells can, and they usually don't provoke attacks of opportunity. Effects or areas that negate or disrupt magic have no effect on extraordinary abilities. They aren't subject to dispelling, and they function normally in an *antimagic field*. Using an extraordinary ability is a free action unless otherwise noted.

Extraordinary ability saving throw DC = 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the modifier for the ability score on which the ability is based + other modifiers (often racial)

NATURAL ABILITIES

This category includes abilities a creature has because of its physical nature, such as a bird's ability to fly. Natural abilities are those not otherwise designated as extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like. They're rarely identified as natural—that's assumed—and they rarely take a distinct action to use. A lion uses its claws as an attack, for instance; it doesn't activate its claws and then attack.

SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES

Usually, a spell-like ability works just like the spell of that name. A few spell-like abilities are unique; these are explained in the text where they're described.

No verbal, somatic, or material components are required to use a spell-like ability, nor does using one require a focus or have an experience point cost. The user activates it mentally. Armor never affects a spell-like ability's use, even if the ability resembles an arcane spell with a somatic component.

A spell-like ability usually has a limit on how often it can be used. If a spell-like ability can be used at will, it has no use limit.

Using a spell-like ability usually takes 1 standard action and provokes attacks of opportunity unless otherwise noted. If the spell-like ability duplicates a spell that has a casting time of less than 1 standard action, the spell-like ability has that casting time. A spell-like ability can be disrupted just as a spell can be. It's possible to use a spell-like ability defensively by making a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level). If the check fails, the ability fails to go off, but the attempt counts against the ability's use limit.

Spell-like abilities are subject to being dispelled by *dispel magic* and to spell resistance if the spell the ability resembles or duplicates is subject to spell resistance. They don't function in areas where magic is suppressed or negated, such as in an *antimagic field*. Spell-like abilities can't be used to counterspell, nor can they be counterspelled.

For creatures that have spell-like abilities, a designated caster level defines how difficult it is to dispel their spell-like effects. This caster level also defines any level-dependent variables, such as range and duration. The creature's caster level never affects which spell-like abilities the creature has; sometimes the given caster level is lower than the level a spellcasting character must have to cast the spell of the same name. If no caster level is specified, the caster level is equal to the creature's Hit Dice.

Some spell-like abilities duplicate spells that work differently when cast by characters of different classes. A monster's spell-like abilities are presumed to be the sorcerer/wizard versions. If the spell in question isn't a sorcerer/wizard spell, then default to cleric, druid, bard, paladin, and ranger, in that order.

Spell-like ability saving throw DC = 10 + the level of the spell the ability resembles or duplicates + the creature's Cha modifier + other modifiers (often racial)

Swift Spell-Like Abilities

The addition of immediate actions and swift actions to the game means that using a quickened spell-like ability is now a swift action instead of a free action. (See Action Types, page 7, for more information.)

NAME THAT SPECIAL ABILITY TYPE

If you're ever find yourself waiting for that last player to show up, here's a quick game you can play. Grab a *Monster Manual*—it doesn't matter which one. Open it up to a random spread, and do a quick scan of the special abilities on those two pages. Pick the monster you think has the hardest special ability type to guess, and read its name and the special ability aloud to your friends (leaving out the special ability type designator, of course). As a group, the other players must agree upon one of the special ability types for their answer. If they guess it right, everyone in the group gets the monster's CR in points. If they don't, you get the CR in points. Pass the book clockwise and repeat. Whoever has the most points after one circuit of the book wins.

This game is just good geeky silliness. When you start playing it, you'll get tripped up on things that seem strange at first glance (such as the beholder's flight—extraordinary!), by effects that are extraordinary for a monster but magical for characters, or traditional spell effects that can be supernatural (such as the pixie's *greater invisibility*). Silliness aside, it also increases your familiarity with the game and its exceptions—at least when it comes to monsters and their abilities.

—Stephen Radney-MacFarland, developer

SUPERNATURAL ABILITIES

Supernatural abilities are magical. They don't function in areas where magic is suppressed or negated, such as in an *antimagic field*. However, these abilities can't be disrupted in combat, as spells can. Supernatural abilities aren't subject to spell resistance, counterspells, or to being dispelled by *dispel magic*.

Just like spell-like abilities, supernatural abilities might have a use limit or be usable at will. A supernatural ability takes a standard action to use unless otherwise noted in the ability description. Using a supernatural ability doesn't usually provoke attacks of opportunity. They never require Concentration checks.

Unless otherwise noted, a supernatural ability has an effective caster level equal to the creature's Hit Dice.

Supernatural ability saving throw DC = 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the modifier for the ability score on which the ability is based + other modifiers (often racial)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

	Extraordinary	Spell-Like	Supernatural
Dispel	No	Yes	No
Spell resistance	No	Yes	No
Antimagic field	No	Yes	Yes
Attack of opportunity	No	Yes	No

Dispel

This line indicates whether *dispel magic* and similar effects dispel the effects of an ability.

Spell Resistance

This line indicates whether spell resistance protects a creature from an ability.

Antimagic Field

This line indicates whether an *antimagic field* or a similar effect suppresses an ability.

Attack of Opportunity

This line indicates whether using an ability provokes attacks of opportunity.

TARGETING SPECIAL ABILITIES

An ability's descriptive text describes how the ability functions, and targeting a special ability that is an attack works like targeting for the attack that the ability most closely resembles. A cone-shaped burst works just like a spell's cone-shaped burst, while a hurled object works like a ranged attack. Many special abilities augment another sort of action as well.

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Spell Descriptions

Each spell is described in a standard format. Each category of information is explained below or in another entry in this book.

SCHOOL (SUBSCHOOL)

Almost every spell belongs to one of eight schools of magic. A school of magic is a group of related spells that work in similar ways. A small number of spells are universal, belonging to no school.

In a spell description, beneath the spell name is a line giving the school of magic (and the subschool, if appropriate) that the spell belongs to.

ABJURATION

Abjurations are protective spells. They create physical or magical barriers, negate magical or physical abilities, harm trespassers, or banish the subject of the spell to another plane of existence.

If one abjuration spell is active within 10 feet of another for 24 hours or more, the magical fields interfere with each other and create barely visible energy fluctuations. The DC to find such spells with the Search skill drops by 4.

If an abjuration creates a barrier that keeps certain types of creatures at bay, that barrier can't be used to push away those creatures. If you force the barrier against such a creature, you feel a discernible pressure against the barrier. If you continue to apply pressure, you end the spell.

CONJURATION

Each conjuration spell belongs to one of five subschools. Conjurations transport creatures from another plane of existence to your plane (calling); create objects or effects on the spot (creation); heal (healing); bring manifestations of objects, creatures, or some form of energy to you (summoning); or transport creatures or objects over great distances (teleportation).

A creature or object brought into being or transported to your location by a conjuration spell can't appear inside another creature or object, nor can it appear floating in an empty space. It must arrive in an open location on a surface capable of supporting it. The creature or object must appear within the spell's range, but it doesn't have to remain within the range.

Calling

A calling spell transports a creature from another plane to the plane you're on. The spell grants the creature the one-time ability to return to its plane of origin, although the spell might limit the circumstances under which this is possible. Creatures that are called actually die when they're killed—they don't disappear and re-form, as do those brought by a summoning spell. The duration of a calling spell is instantaneous, which means that the called creature can't be dispelled.

Creation

A creation spell manipulates matter to create an object or creature in the place the spellcaster designates, subject to the limits noted for all conjuration spells. If the spell has a duration other than instantaneous, magic holds the creation together, and when the spell ends, the conjured creature or object vanishes without a trace. If the spell has an instantaneous duration, the created object or creature is merely assembled through magic. It lasts indefinitely and doesn't depend on magic for its existence.

Healing

Certain conjurations can heal creatures or bring them back to life.

Summoning

A summoning spell instantly brings a creature or object to a place you designate. When the spell ends or is dispelled, a summoned creature is instantly sent back to where it came from, but a summoned object isn't sent back unless the spell's description specifically indicates this. A summoned creature also goes away if it's killed or if its hit points drop to 0 or lower. It isn't really dead. It takes 24 hours for the creature to re-form, during which time it can't be summoned again.

When the spell that summoned a creature ends and the creature disappears, all the spells it has cast end. A summoned creature can't use any innate summoning abilities it might have. It refuses to use any abilities that cost it experience points or would cost experience points if they were spells.

Teleportation

A teleportation spell transports one or more creatures or objects a great distance. The most powerful of these spells can cross planar boundaries. Unlike summoning spells, unless otherwise noted, the transportation is one-way and not dispellable.

Teleportation is instantaneous travel through the Astral Plane. Anything that blocks astral travel also blocks teleportation.

DIVINATION

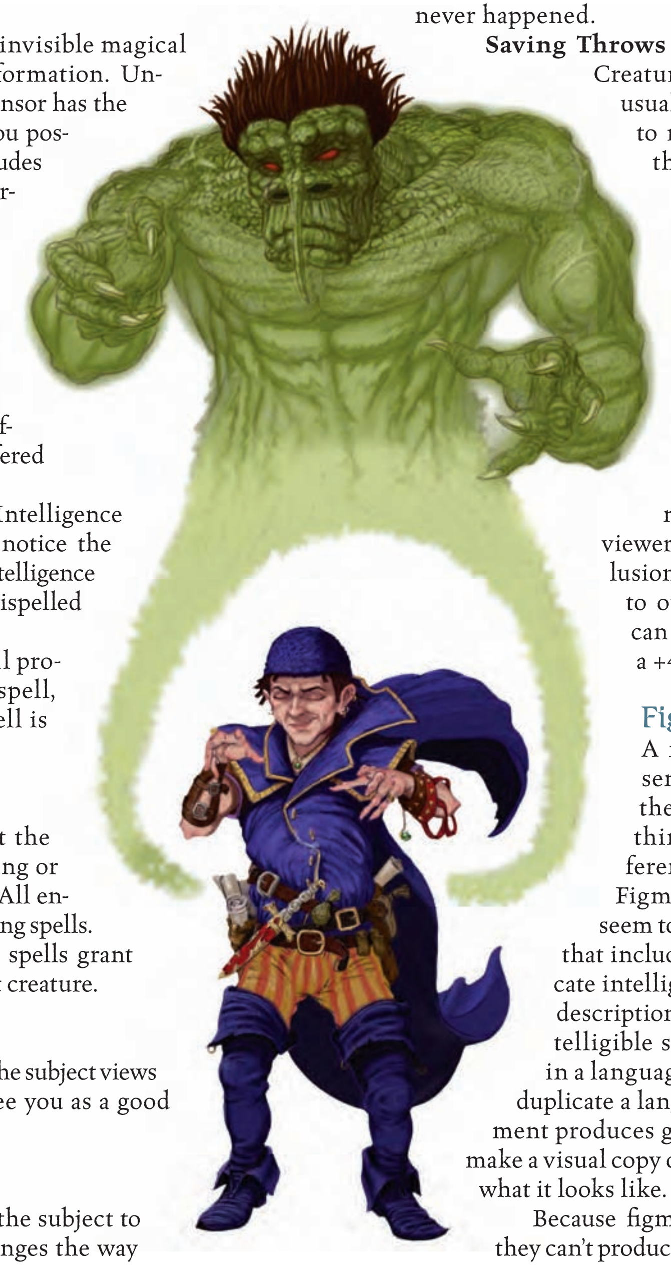
Divination spells enable you to learn secrets long forgotten, to predict the future, to find someone or something that has

(SUB) SCHOOLED

I was playing in David Noonan's Eberron game, and we triggered runes that conjured up some gulthirs (devils described in *Monster Manual V*). One of them swallowed our rogue and puked her back up, causing her to come under a *dominate monster* effect. Having our rogue flanking and sneak attacking us isn't a top-tier strategy. Since we didn't want that happening to the rest of our party, our archivist dropped *magic circle against evil*, which could have kept the gulthirs from eating us—if they'd been summoned instead of . . . called.

—Logan Bonner, editor

been hidden, and to foil deceptive spells. Many divination spells have cone-shaped areas. These move with you and extend in the direction you look. The cone defines the area that you can sweep each round. If you study the same area for multiple rounds, you can often gain additional information, as noted in the spell's description.



Illus. by D. Walstrom

Scrying

A scrying spell creates an invisible magical sensor that sends you information. Unless otherwise noted, the sensor has the same sensory acuity that you possess. This level of acuity includes any spells or effects that target you, but not spells or effects that emanate from you. However, the sensor is treated as a separate, independent sensory organ of yours, and thus it functions normally even if you have been blinded, deafened, or otherwise have suffered sensory impairment.

Any creature that has an Intelligence score of 12 or higher can notice the sensor by making a DC 20 Intelligence check. The sensor can be dispelled as if it were an active spell.

Lead sheeting or magical protection blocks a scrying spell, and you sense that the spell is so blocked.

ENCHANTMENT

Enchantment spells affect the minds of others, influencing or controlling their behavior. All enchantments are mind-affecting spells. Two types of enchantment spells grant you influence over a subject creature.

Charm

A charm spell changes how the subject views you, typically making it see you as a good friend. See Charm, page 28.

Compulsion

A compulsion spell forces the subject to act in some manner or changes the way the subject's mind works. Some compulsion spells dictate what the subject does or the effects on the subject, but other compulsion spells allow you to determine what the subject does when you cast the spell. A few give you ongoing control over the subject. See Compulsion, page 28.

EVOCATION

Evocation spells manipulate energy or tap an unseen source of power to produce a desired end. In effect, they create something out of nothing. Many of these spells produce spectacular effects, and evocation spells can deal large amounts of damage.

ILLUSION

Illusion spells deceive the senses or minds of others. They cause people to see what isn't there, not see what is there, hear phantom noises, or remember events that never happened.

Saving Throws and Illusions (Disbelief): Creatures encountering an illusion usually don't receive saving throws to recognize it as illusory until they study it carefully or interact with it in some fashion. A successful saving throw against an illusion reveals it to be false, but a figment or phantasm remains as a translucent outline. A failed saving throw indicates that a creature fails to notice something is amiss. A creature faced with proof that an illusion isn't real needs no saving throw. If any viewer successfully disbelieves an illusion and communicates this fact to others, each informed viewer can make a new saving throw with a +4 bonus.

Figment

A figment spell creates a false sensation. Those who perceive the figment perceive the same thing, not their own slightly different versions of the figment. Figments can't make something seem to be something else. A figment that includes audible effects can't duplicate intelligible speech unless the spell's description specifically says it can. If intelligible speech is possible, it must be in a language you can speak. If you try to duplicate a language you can't speak, the figment produces gibberish. Likewise, you can't make a visual copy of something unless you know what it looks like.

Because figments and glamers are unreal, they can't produce real effects the way that other types of illusions can. They can't cause damage to objects or creatures, support weight, supply nutrition, or provide protection from the elements. Consequently, these spells are useful for confounding or delaying foes but useless for attacking opponents directly.

A figment's AC is equal to 10 + its size modifier.

Glamer

A glamer spell changes a subject's sensory qualities, making it look, feel, taste, smell, or sound like something else, or even seem to disappear.

Pattern

Like a figment, a pattern spell creates an image that others can see, but a pattern also affects the minds of those who see it or are caught in it. All patterns are mind-affecting spells.

Phantasm

A phantasm spell creates a mental image that usually only the caster and the subject (or subjects) of the spell can perceive. This impression is totally in the minds of the subjects, not a fake picture or something that they actually sense. It's a personalized mental impression. Third parties viewing or studying the scene don't notice the phantasm. All phantasms are mind-affecting spells.

Shadow

A shadow spell creates something that is partially real. Such illusions can have real effects. Damage dealt by a shadow illusion is real.

NECROMANCY

Necromancy spells manipulate the power of death, unlife, and the life force. Spells involving undead creatures make up a large part of this school.

TRANSMUTATION

Transmutation spells change the properties of some creature, object, or condition.

Polymorph

A spell of the polymorph subschool changes the target's form from one shape to another. Unless otherwise noted in the spell's description, the target of a polymorph spell takes on all the statistics and special abilities of an average member of the assumed form in place of its own except as follows.

- The target retains its own alignment and personality, within the limits of the assumed form's ability scores.
- The target retains its own hit points.
- The target is treated has having its normal Hit Dice for purpose of adjudicating effects based on HD, such as the *sleep* spell, though it uses the assumed form's base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and all other statistics derived from Hit Dice.
- The target retains the ability to understand the languages it understands in its natural form. If the assumed form is normally capable of speech, the target retains the ability to speak these languages as well. It can write in the languages it understands, but only if the assumed form is capable of writing in some manner—even a primitive manner, such as drawing in the dirt with a paw.

In all other ways, the target's normal game statistics are effectively replaced by those of the assumed form. The target loses all the special abilities it has in its natural form, including its class features, even if the assumed form would normally be able to use these class features.

If the assumed form's size is different from the target's normal size, its new space must share as much of the natural form's space as possible, squeezing into the available space (see Squeezing, page 95) if necessary. If insufficient space exists for the assumed form, the spell fails.

Any gear worn or carried by the target melds into the assumed form and becomes nonfunctional. When the target reverts to its natural form, any objects previously melded into the assumed form reappear in the same location on its body they previously occupied and are once again functional. Any new items worn in the assumed form fall off and land at the target's feet.

The spellcaster can freely designate the assumed form's minor physical qualities, such as hair color and skin color, within the normal ranges for a creature of that kind. The assumed form's significant physical qualities, such as height, weight, and gender, are also under the spellcaster's control, but they must fall within the norms for the assumed form's kind. The target of a polymorph spell is effectively camouflaged as a creature of its assumed form, and it gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.

If the target of a polymorph spell is slain or rendered unconscious, the spell ends. Any part of the body that is separated from the whole remains polymorphed until the effect ends. Incorporeal creatures or those in gaseous form are immune to polymorph spells, as are creatures of the plant type. A creature of the shapechanger subtype can revert to its natural form as a standard action.

Illus. by W. O'Connor

Polymorph Subschool and Preexisting Spells: Any spell based on either *alter self* or *polymorph* should be considered to have the polymorph subschool. However, a spell's existing rules text takes priority over that of the subschool.

DUAL-SCHOOL SPELLS

Dual-school spells have effects that encompass two distinct schools of magic. In all cases, treat these spells as if they belonged to both schools. Effects that prevent a spellcaster from accessing one school of a dual-school spell prevent all access to that spell. Specialist wizards can't learn a dual-school spell if either of the spell's schools is one of their prohibited schools. Benefits that apply to a school of magic don't stack with themselves even if the spellcaster can apply them to both schools of magic. For example, if a spellcaster has the Spell Focus feat for either school, it applies to the dual-school spell normally. However, spellcasters who have taken the Spell Focus feat for both of a dual-school spell's associated schools increase the DC of the dual-school spell by only 1.

DESCRIPTOR

A descriptor further categorizes a spell. Some spells have more than one descriptor. Most descriptors have no game effect by themselves, but they govern how the spell interacts with other spells, with special abilities, with unusual creatures, with alignment, and so on. The descriptors are listed on the following table.

Spell Descriptors

Acid
Air
Chaotic
Cold
Darkness
Death
Earth
Electricity
Evil
Fear
Fire
Force
Good
Language-dependent[1]
Lawful
Light
Mind-affecting[2]
Sonic
Water

1 A language-dependent spell uses intelligible language as a medium for communication. If the target can't understand or can't hear what the caster of a language-dependent spell says, the spell fails.

2 A mind-affecting spell works only against creatures that have an Intelligence score of 1 or higher.

LEVEL

Spell level is a number between 0 and 9 that defines the spell's relative power. This number is preceded by the name of the class whose members can cast the spell or an abbreviation of that class. The Level line in a spell description also indicates whether a spell is a domain spell and, if so, what its domain and its level as a domain spell are. A spell's level affects the DC for any save allowed against the effect.

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Illus. by W. Reynolds

COMPONENTS

A spell's components define what you must do or possess to cast it. The Components line in a spell description includes abbreviations and words that tell you what components you need. A spell's description might be more specific about the components required. Usually you don't worry about components, but when you can't use a component or when a component is expensive, then the components are important.

Illus. by R. Spencer

VERBAL

A verbal component is a spoken incantation. If a spell requires a verbal component, a V appears on the Components line. To provide a verbal component, you must be able to speak in a strong voice. A *silence* spell or a gag spoils the incantation, and thus the spell. Deafened spellcasters have a 20% chance to spoil any spell they try to cast that has a verbal component.

SOMATIC

A somatic component is a measured and precise movement of the hand. An S appears on a spell's Components line when a somatic component is required. You must have at least one hand free to provide a somatic component.

MATERIAL

A material component is one or more physical substances or objects that are annihilated during the casting process. If a spell requires material components, an M appears on the Components line, and details on the specific component or components appear in the spell's description. Unless a cost is given for a material component, the cost is negligible. Assume you have all components of negligible cost that you need as long as you have your spell component pouch. Unless these materials are elaborate, preparing them is a free action.

FOCUS

A focus component is a prop of some sort. An F appears on a spell's Components line when a focus is required. The actual item required for the focus is detailed in the spell's description. Unlike a material component, a focus isn't consumed when the spell is cast. A focus can be reused. As with material components, the cost for a focus is negligible unless a price is given—assume that focus components of negligible cost are in your spell component pouch. Unless a focus is a large or awkward item, preparing it is a free action.

DIVINE FOCUS

A divine focus component is an item of spiritual significance. When a divine focus is required, a DF appears on a spell's Components line. A divine focus is usually a holy symbol appropriate to the character's faith. Preparing and using a divine focus is just like preparing and using a normal focus.

If the Components line includes F/DF or M/DF, the arcane version of the spell has a focus component or a material component (the abbreviation before the slash), and the divine version has a divine focus component (the abbreviation after the slash).

EXPERIENCE POINT

Some powerful spells entail an experience point cost, and such spells have XP on their Components line. No spell can restore experience points spent in this manner. You can't spend so many experience points that you lose a level, so you can't cast the spell unless you have enough experience points to spare. However, you can, on gaining enough experience to attain a new level, use those experience points for casting a spell rather than keeping them and advancing a level. Experience points are treated just like a material component—they are expended when you cast the spell, whether or not the casting succeeds.

CASTING TIME

Casting time is the amount of time it takes to perform the act of spellcasting for a particular spell. All required activities for casting the spell are encompassed in its casting time unless otherwise noted in a spell's description. Casting times are described here in order from shortest to longest. See Action Types, page 7, for more information.

IMMEDIATE ACTION

A spell that takes 1 immediate action to cast can be cast at any time, even when it isn't your turn. Such casting follows all the rules for immediate actions. Casting such a spell doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Feather Fall

The addition of immediate actions to the game means that casting *feather fall* is now an immediate action instead of a free action, since you can cast the spell at any time, even if it's not your turn. (See Action Types, page 7, for more information.)

SWIFT ACTION

A spell that takes 1 swift action to cast must be cast on your turn, but the casting doesn't interfere with your other actions on your turn. Such casting follows all the rules for swift actions. Casting such a spell doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Quickened Spells

The addition of swift actions to the game means that casting a spell modified by the Quicken Spell metamagic feat is now a swift action instead of a free action that can be performed only during your turn. (See Action Types, page 7, for more information.)

STANDARD ACTION

A spell that has a casting time of 1 standard action is cast on your turn, and the spell comes into effect after the standard action is complete.

ROUND

A spell that takes 1 round to cast is like a full-round action, but unlike most full-round actions, the results don't happen by the end of your turn. Instead, the spell comes into effect just before the beginning of your turn in the round after the one in which you began casting the spell. You then take your turn normally after the spell comes into effect.

1 MINUTE

A spell that takes 1 minute to cast comes into effect just before the beginning of your turn 1 minute (10 rounds) later. For each of those 10 rounds, you're casting a spell as a full-round action. These actions must be consecutive and uninterrupted, or the spell fails.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

LONGER TIMES

Casting a spell that has a casting time longer than 1 minute doesn't usually happen in combat. If it does, every round of casting requires a full-round action, and all the actions required to cast the spell must be consecutive and uninterrupted, or the spell fails.

SPONTANEOUS METAMAGIC SPELLS

Spontaneous spellcasters, including those who normally prepare spells but can spontaneously cast particular spells, must take more time to cast a metamagic spell—a spell enhanced by one or more metamagic feats. If a spell's normal casting time is 1 standard action, casting a metamagic version of the spell is a full-round action for a spontaneous spellcaster. This isn't the same as a 1-round casting time—the spell takes effect during the same turn that the spellcaster begins casting it. Metamagic spells that have a longer casting time take an extra full-round action to cast spontaneously.

I GET A ROUND?

I'm sure many D&D groups consider a 1-round casting time to be a full-round action. If you house-rule it that way, it's okay.

The 1-round casting time, if played strictly according to the rules, has drawbacks beyond the hassle of merely tracking it properly. You have to wait for the start of your next turn for the effect, your opponents get extra time to interfere with your casting, and you don't know if your targets will be in range when the casting is done. For suffering these drawbacks, a druid (the major player in the 1-round-casting game) gets the benefit of summoning an ally, dropping lightning bolts repeatedly, or bringing down a *storm of vengeance*. Seems like a good trade.

Spells that typically require 1 round casting times are enchantment spells and summoning spells. A fundamental similarity between the summon and enchantment spells is that they create an imbalance in available actions. The summon spells give you more opportunities to act, and the enchantment spells take away your opponents' actions, sometimes giving them to you.

—Logan Bonner, editor

Illus. by W. Reynolds

RANGE

A spell's range is the maximum distance from you at which the spell's effect can occur, as well as the maximum distance at which you can designate the spell's point of origin. If any portion of the spell's area would extend beyond this point, that area is wasted. Standard ranges include the following.

PERSONAL

The spell affects only you.

TOUCH

You must touch the target to affect it. Some touch spells allow you to touch multiple targets. If you aren't in combat when you cast a touch spell, you can touch as many willing targets as you can reach as part of the casting.

Touch Spells in Combat

Using a touch spell during combat requires some special considerations.

Allies and Touch Spells: To use a touch spell on allies during combat, you cast the spell and then touch those you can reach. You can touch one friend as a standard action or up to six friends as a full-round action. If the spell allows you to touch multiple targets as part of the spell, you can't hold the charge (see below)—you must touch all targets of the spell in the same turn that you finish casting the spell. If the spell allows only one target, you can touch that target during the same turn you cast the spell, or you can hold the charge.

You can move before casting the spell, after touching the target, or between casting the spell and touching the target. If you use a full-round action to touch multiple targets, you can take only a 5-foot step.

Opponents and Touch Spells: To use a touch spell against an opponent during combat, you cast the spell and then touch that opponent. You can touch the opponent on the same turn you cast the spell. To touch an opponent, you must succeed on an attack roll to make a melee touch attack. You can hold the charge and move as defined for touching allies.

Touch Attacks

Touching an opponent with a touch spell is considered to be an armed attack and therefore doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. However, the act of casting a spell does provoke attacks of opportunity. Touch attacks to deliver touch spells follow all normal rules for touch attacks—see Touch Attacks, page 16.

Holding the Charge

If you don't discharge a touch spell during the turn when you cast it, you can hold the charge of the spell indefinitely. You can continue to make touch attacks round after round until you successfully discharge the spell. If you touch anything while holding a charge, even unintentionally, the spell discharges. Intentionally touching anything, even a figment that isn't really present, discharges the spell as well. You continue holding the charge if something touches you.

Unarmed and Natural Attacks with Touch Spells: If you hold the charge of a touch spell, you can make a normal unarmed attack or an attack with a natural weapon at a later time. In this case, you're considered armed only if your unarmed attack or natural weapon attack doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Otherwise, you provoke attacks of opportunity as normal. If the attack hits, you deal normal damage for your unarmed attack or natural weapon, and the spell discharges. If the attack misses, you're still holding the charge.

CLOSE

The spell reaches as far as 25 feet + 5 feet per two caster levels.

MEDIUM

The spell reaches as far as 100 feet + 10 feet per caster level.

LONG

The spell reaches as far as 400 feet + 40 feet per caster level.

UNLIMITED

The spell reaches anywhere on the same plane of existence.

OTHER RANGES

Some spells have no standard range category. Such spells have their range defined on the Range line of the spell description.

DURATION

A spell's Duration line tells you how long the spell lasts.

CONCENTRATION

The spell lasts for as long as you concentrate on it. Concentrating to maintain a spell is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Anything that could break your concentration when casting a spell can also break your concentration while you're maintaining one, causing the spell to end.

You can't cast a spell while concentrating on another one. Sometimes a spell lasts for a short time after you cease concentrating.

DISMISSIBLE

If the Duration line ends with (D), you can dismiss the spell at will. You must be within range of the spell's effect and must speak words of dismissal, which are usually a modified form of the spell's verbal component. If the spell has no verbal component, you can dismiss the effect with a gesture. Dismissing a spell is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

A spell that depends on concentration is dismissible by its very nature, and dismissing it doesn't take an action, since all you have to do to end the spell is to stop concentrating on your turn.

INSTANTANEOUS

The spell energy comes and goes the instant the spell is cast, though the spell's effects might last longer.

PERMANENT

The energy remains as long as the effect does. This means the spell is vulnerable to *dispel magic*.

Illus. by J. Pavelec

TIMED

Many durations are measured in rounds, minutes, hours, or some other time increment. When that time is up, the spell ends. If a spell's duration is variable, the duration is rolled secretly, so the caster doesn't know how long the spell might last.

SUBJECTS, EFFECTS, AND AREAS

If a spell affects creatures directly, its result travels with the subjects for the spell's duration. If the spell creates an effect, the effect lasts for the duration. The effect might move or remain still. Such an effect can be dispelled prior to when its duration ends. If a spell affects an area, then the spell stays with that area for its duration. Unless otherwise noted in a spell's description, creatures become subject to the spell when they enter the area and are no longer subject to it when they leave.

TRIGGERED OR DISCHARGED

Occasionally a spell lasts for a set duration, or until triggered or discharged. Whichever event happens first determines such a spell's actual duration.

RAY SPELLS

If a ray spell has a duration, it's the duration of the effect that the ray causes, not the length of time the ray itself persists.

OTHER PARTS

Other parts of a spell's description include its Saving Throw line, Spell Resistance line, and descriptive text. Saving throws and spell resistance are described elsewhere in this book—page 112 and page 130 respectively. The text of a spell description details what the spell does and how it works. If one of the previous entries in the description included "see text," this is where the explanation is found.

TRACKING DURATION

Monitoring spell durations can be a chore. Here are some ways people around Wizards R&D track theirs.

Tick Marks or Checkboxes: Low-tech, but easy.

Dice: You've got plenty sitting around. Make sure you don't roll your duration die by accident.

Counters: When you start up your spell, get out a number of counters or poker chips equal to the duration. Cash one in at the start of your turn.

Initiative Card: If the DM is using cards to track initiative, spell duration can go on your card so it always gets checked when your turn comes up.

Initiative Tracker: If the DM uses a board for initiative, your active spells can go right by your name. You can put different spells in different colors to make it easier.

Battle Mat: If you're using a dry-erase or wet-erase battle mat, mark the active spells right on the edge.

—Logan Bonner, editor

Spell Preparation

Many arcane and divine spellcasters have to prepare their spells ahead of time.

ARCANE PREPARATION

Arcane spellcasters, also known as arcanists, prepare spells in a particular way, following specific rules. A character's level in an arcane spellcasting class limits the number of spells that character can prepare and cast. Arcane spellcasters can prepare the same spell more than once, but each such preparation counts as one spell toward the daily limit.

A high Intelligence score allows an arcanist to prepare a few extra spells. To prepare a spell, an arcanist must have an Intelligence score of at least 10 + the spell's level.

Illus. by E. Deschamps

REST

To prepare daily spells, an arcane spellcaster must first rest for 8 hours. Sleep isn't required for the whole time, but arcanists must refrain from movement, combat, spellcasting, skill use, conversation, or any other demanding physical or mental task during the rest period. If this rest is interrupted, each interruption adds 1 hour to the total amount of time an arcane spellcaster must rest to clear the mind. Immediately prior to preparing spells, arcane spellcasters must have at least 1 hour of uninterrupted rest. Creatures that don't need to sleep still require 8 hours of restful calm before preparing any spells.

SPELL SLOTS

A class table shows how many spells of each level a spellcaster of that class can cast per day. These openings for daily spells are called spell slots. A spellcaster has the option to fill a higher-level spell slot with a lower-level spell.

As they gain levels, spellcasters who lack a high enough ability score to cast higher-level spells still gain access to the slots associated with those spells. Those slots must be filled with lower-level spells.

RECENT CASTING LIMIT

If an arcanist has cast spells recently, the drain from doing so reduces the capacity to prepare new spells. When arcane spellcasters prepare spells for the coming day, all the spells they have cast within the last 8 hours count against their daily limit.

PREPARATION ENVIRONMENT

To prepare any spell, an arcane spellcaster must have enough peace, quiet, and comfort to allow for proper concentration. The surroundings need not be luxurious, but they must be free from overt distractions. Exposure to inclement weather prevents the necessary concentration, as does any injury or failed saving throw the character might experience while studying. Arcanists also must have access to their spellbooks to study from and sufficient light to read those books by. However, an arcane spellcaster can prepare a *read magic* spell without a spellbook.

SPELL PREPARATION PROCESS

After resting, arcanists must study their spellbooks to prepare any spells that day. It takes 1 hour to prepare the entire daily allotment of spell slots. Preparing some smaller portion of the daily allotment takes a proportionally smaller amount of time, but always at least 15 minutes. This is the minimum time required to achieve the proper mental state for spell preparation.

Until arcane spellcasters prepare spells, the only spells they have available to cast are the ones already prepared and not yet used from the previous day. During the study period, arcanists choose which spells to prepare. If an arcane spellcaster wishes, some or all of the spells still prepared from the previous day can be abandoned to make room for preparing new ones.

MAGIC BOUND

Most of a wizard's companions (particularly those impetuous sorcerers) don't understand that spell preparation is as much art as it is science. Yes, you want to choose spells that will aid in the team's success, but no one—not even the most accomplished diviner—can be certain of what a new day will bring.

And that's why, despite the sorcerer's claims that you're a hidebound, nose-in-the-books bore, you understand that unpredictability is key. You're not limited to casting the same roster of spells every day, which means that your enemies never know what to expect from you. With an essentially infinite arsenal of combinations to draw upon, and the understanding that knowledge is power, you can reinvent yourself every day.

—Michele Carter, editor

When preparing spells for the day, arcane spellcasters can leave some spell slots open. Later during that day, they can repeat the preparation process as often as they like, time and circumstances permitting, to fill those open slots. They can't, however, fill any slot that contained a prepared spell after the initial preparation process of the day. This means an arcanist can't abandon a recently prepared spell to prepare another, nor can that spellcaster refill spell slots of spells that have been cast since the initial preparation process of the day. (Such a spell slot is expended, not open.) Like the initial preparation process of the day, these impromptu preparation processes take 15 minutes or longer.

Illus. by M. Cavotta

METAMAGIC FEATS

During preparation, spellcasters who prepare spells choose which spells to prepare augmented by metamagic feats. Thus, the spellcaster chooses which spells take up higher-level spell slots than normal.

A spellcaster can apply multiple metamagic feats to a single spell. Changes to a spell's level are cumulative. A spellcaster can't apply the same metamagic feat more than once to a single spell.

PREPARED SPELL RETENTION

Once arcanists prepare a spell, it remains in their mind as a nearly cast spell until they use the prescribed components to complete and cast it, or until they abandon it. Other events, such as the effects of magic items or special attacks from monsters, can wipe a prepared spell from a character's mind, leaving an expended slot behind.

DIVINE PREPARATION

Divine spellcasters who prepare their spells do so in largely the same manner that arcane spellcasters do, but with a few differences as described here. The relevant ability for divine spells is Wisdom, so bonus spells are based on Wisdom. To prepare a divine spell, a character must have a Wisdom score of 10 + the spell's level.

SPELL SLOTS

Spell slots work for divine spellcasters just as they do for arcane spellcasters.

RECENT CASTING LIMIT

As with arcane spells, at the time of preparation, any spells cast within the previous 8 hours count against the number of spells that can be prepared by a divine spellcaster.

PREPARATION ENVIRONMENT

A divine spellcaster chooses and prepares spells ahead of time, just as an arcanist does. To prepare any spell, a divine spellcaster must have a peaceful environment that allows for proper concentration, just as an arcane spellcaster does. However, a divine spellcaster doesn't require a period of rest to do so. Instead, the spellcaster chooses a particular time of day to prepare spells. This time is usually associated with some daily event important to the deity, religion, or creed a divine spellcaster follows. If a divine spellcaster is prevented from preparing spells at the proper time, he must do so as soon as possible. If unable to stop and prepare spells at the first opportunity, a divine spellcaster must wait until the next day to prepare spells.

SPELL PREPARATION PROCESS

A divine spellcaster selects and prepares spells ahead of time through prayer and meditation at a particular time of day. The time required to prepare spells is 1 hour, the same as it is for arcane spellcasters. Divine spellcasters don't have to prepare all their spells at once. However, divine spellcasters are considered fresh of mind only during their initial daily preparation process, so they can't fill a slot that is empty because they cast or abandoned a previously prepared spell.

Divine spellcasters don't require spellbooks. However, such characters' spell selection is limited to the spells on the list for their class.

METAMAGIC FEATS

Metamagic feats work for divine spellcasters just as they do for arcane spellcasters, as long as the divine spellcaster can actually take and use the metamagic feat in question.

PREPARED SPELL RETENTION

Spells remain in a divine spellcaster's mind until cast, abandoned, or removed by some effect, just as with arcane spellcasters.

Spell Resistance

Spell resistance is the extraordinary ability to avoid being affected by some spells and spell-like abilities. A few spells also grant spell resistance.

Extraordinary and supernatural abilities, including enhancement bonuses on magic weapons, aren't subject to spell resistance. A creature can have some abilities that are subject to spell resistance and some that aren't. Some spells ignore spell resistance (see When Spell Resistance Applies, below).

A creature's spell resistance never interferes with its own spells, items, or abilities.

A creature that has spell resistance can't impart this power to others by touching them or standing in their midst. Only the rarest of creatures and magic items have the ability to bestow spell resistance upon another.

Spell resistance doesn't stack. It overlaps. So, the strongest spell resistance applies while it lasts.

OVERCOMING SPELL RESISTANCE

To affect a creature that has spell resistance, a spellcaster must make a caster level check (see page 31) at least equal to the creature's spell resistance. If the caster fails the check, the spell doesn't affect the target creature. The creature need not be aware of the threat for its spell resistance to operate.

A creature can voluntarily lower its spell resistance. Doing so is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Once a creature lowers its resistance, that resistance remains down until the creature's next turn. At the beginning of the creature's next turn, its spell resistance automatically returns unless it intentionally keeps its spell resistance down by using another standard action.

WHEN SPELL RESISTANCE APPLIES

Each spell description includes a line that indicates whether spell resistance applies to the spell.

The Spell Resistance line of a spell description might include notations similar to saving throw notations. These include:

(harmless): The spell is usually beneficial, not harmful, but a targeted creature's spell resistance still applies.

(object): The spell can be cast on objects, but not necessarily only on objects. Some spells of this sort can be cast on creatures and/or objects. Objects receive spell resistance only if they're magical or if a creature that has spell resistance attends (holds, wears, grasps) them. The object uses the higher of its or the attending creature's spell resistance.

Targeted Spells

If a spell that affects one or more targets allows spell resistance, a creature's spell resistance applies if the spell is targeted at the creature. Some individually targeted spells can be directed at several creatures simultaneously. In such cases, a creature's spell resistance applies only to the portion of the spell actually targeted at that creature. If several different resistant creatures are subjected to such a spell, the caster checks to overcome each creature's spell resistance separately.

Area Spells

If a spell that affects an area allows spell resistance, a creature's spell resistance applies if the creature is within the spell's area. It protects the resistant creature without affecting the spell itself.

Effect Spells

Most effect spells summon or create something, and they aren't subject to spell resistance. Sometimes, however, spell resistance applies to effect spells, usually to those that act upon a creature directly, such as *web*. Spell resistance can protect a creature from a spell that has already been cast. Check spell resistance when the creature is first affected by the spell.

Check spell resistance only once for any particular casting of a spell or use of a spell-like ability. If a creature's spell resistance fails the first time, it fails each time the creature encounters that same casting of the spell. Likewise, if spell resistance succeeds the first time, it always succeeds. If a creature has voluntarily lowered its spell resistance and is then subjected to a spell, the creature still has a single chance to resist that spell later, when its spell resistance is again functioning.

Spell resistance has no effect unless the energy created or released by the spell actually goes to work on the resistant creature's mind or body. If the spell acts on anything else and the creature is affected as a consequence, no roll is required. Creatures can be harmed by a spell without being directly affected.

Spell resistance doesn't apply if an effect fools the creature's senses or reveals something about the creature.

EVOLUTION OF SPELL RESISTANCE

Back in the old days of the original *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* game, monsters had magic resistance, expressed as a percentage chance that a spell cast by an 11th-level wizard would fail against the monster. That chance went up or down by 5% for each level of difference between the caster and 11th level—or it did, if you played strictly by the rules. I'm not sure I ever did.

One interesting aspect is that magic resistance was a percentage chance that meant a different thing for different levels of monsters. A low-level monster with 50% magic resistance was immune to the spells of a 1st-level caster, so 50% resistance was really bad for a low-level caster. A high-level monster with 50% magic resistance had no defense against a 21st-level caster, so the same percentage was really good for a high-level caster.

The rules of Second Edition simplified magic resistance into a straight percentage chance that the monster could ignore a spell. So 50% magic resistance negated half of all spells, without regard to the level of the spellcaster. It was just as good for a high-level monster as for a low-level monster. But if a high-level caster faced low-level monsters, his spells might still fail—this system didn't respect the level of the caster at all.

Spell resistance in 3e is a whole lot cleaner, while still having a lot in common with the First Edition system. If a CR 11 monster has SR 22, then a spell cast by an 11th-level wizard has a 50% chance of failing against that monster, because the caster needs to roll an 11 or better on 1d20 to affect the monster. But if the spellcaster is higher or lower level than the monster, that chance of failure goes up or down by 5%.

This system respects the caster's level, like the First Edition system. But it gives you a consistent numerical scale, like the Second Edition system. It's the best of both worlds.

—James Wyatt, designer

Magic has to be working for spell resistance to apply. Spells that have instantaneous durations but lasting results aren't subject to spell resistance unless the resistant creature is exposed to the spell the instant that spell is cast.

When in doubt about whether a spell's effect is direct or indirect, consider the spell's school.

Abjuration: The target creature must be harmed, changed, or restricted in some manner for spell resistance to apply. Perception changes aren't subject to spell resistance.

Abjurations that block or negate attacks aren't subject to an attacker's spell resistance. The protected creature is affected by the spell, becoming immune or resistant to the attack.

Conjuration: These spells aren't usually subject to spell resistance unless the spell conjures some form of energy. Spells that summon creatures or produce effects that function like creatures aren't subject to spell resistance.

Divination: These spells don't affect creatures directly and aren't subject to spell resistance, even though what they reveal about a creature might be very revealing.

Enchantment: Since enchantment spells affect creatures' minds, they're typically subject to spell resistance.

Evocation: If an evocation spell deals damage to a creature, it has a direct effect (and spell resistance applies). If the spell damages something else, it has an indirect effect (and spell resistance does not apply).

Illusion: These spells are almost never subject to spell resistance. Illusions that involve a direct attack are exceptions.

Necromancy: Most of these spells alter the target creature's life force and are subject to spell resistance. Unusual necromancy spells that don't affect other creatures directly aren't subject to spell resistance.

Transmutation: These spells are subject to spell resistance if they transform the target creature. Transmutation spells aren't subject to spell resistance if they're targeted on a point in space instead of on a creature. Some transmutations make objects harmful or more harmful. Even these spells aren't usually subject to spell resistance, because they affect the objects, not the creatures against which the objects are used.

SUCCESSFUL SPELL RESISTANCE

Spell resistance prevents a spell or a spell-like ability from affecting or harming the resistant creature, but it never removes a magical effect from another creature or negates a spell's effect on another creature. Spell resistance prevents a spell from affecting another spell on the resistant creature, as well as from disrupting a spell the resistant creature is casting.

Against an ongoing spell that has already been cast, a failed check against spell resistance allows the resistant creature to ignore any effect the spell might have. The magic continues to affect others normally.

IMMUNITY TO MAGIC

A creature that has this characteristic is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. Certain spells and effects might function differently against the creature, as noted in its description.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

Spellcasting

Whether a spell is arcane or divine, and whether a character prepares spells casts them spontaneously, casting a spell works the same way.

WEAPONLIKE SPELLS

Developing attributes that support your spellcasting ability is an important aspect of how effective you are as a spellcaster. Such development occurs outside adventures and is most relevant when dealing with spells that function like weapons in certain respects. Any spell that requires an attack roll is weaponlike. Most weaponlike spells also deal some form of damage—lethal damage, nonlethal damage, ability damage, or ability drain. Some bestow negative levels, or they grant conditions or penalties.

You can use some combat-enhancing feats to improve the effectiveness of weaponlike spells. For the purpose of taking combat-enhancing feats, weaponlike spells fall into two categories—ranged spells and touch spells. Ranged spells include those that require ranged touch attack rolls, such as rays and hurled missile effects. This category also includes spells that generate effects that act as ranged weapons and require ranged attack rolls. Touch spells include any damage-dealing spells that have a range of touch.

ELIGIBLE FEATS

The following feats can be chosen to enhance the performance of weaponlike spells in combat.

Improved Critical: Choose one category of weaponlike spells (ranged spells or touch spells). When you use a spell of the selected category, its threat range is doubled, so that a spell that normally threatens a critical hit on a roll of 20 has a threat range of 19–20. You can gain this feat a second time, choosing a different category of weaponlike spells.

Improved Unarmed Strike: You can add the damage of your unarmed strike to the damage of a touch spell by delivering the spell as a regular melee attack instead of a melee touch attack. The defender gets the full benefit of armor and shield, but if the attack hits, the unarmed strike deals normal damage over and above any damage the spell deals as it's discharged. If the unarmed strike misses, then the spell isn't discharged.

If the unarmed strike scores a critical hit, damage from the spell isn't multiplied.

Point Blank Shot: You get a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls with ranged spells that deal hit point damage at ranges of up to 30 feet.

Spells that deal only ability damage, bestow penalties on ability scores, or deal energy drain gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls but no bonus on damage.

Precise Shot: You can fire a ranged spell at an opponent engaged in melee without taking the usual –4 penalty on your attack roll.

Stunning Fist: When you use your unarmed strike to deliver a touch spell with a successful melee attack, as described in the Improved Unarmed Strike entry, you also stun any target that fails the Fortitude save required by Stunning Fist.

Weapon Finesse: You can treat touch spells as light weapons and use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on your touch attack rolls with such spells.

Weapon Focus: Choose one category of weaponlike spells, ranged spells or touch spells, and gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls made with such spells. You can gain this feat a second time, choosing a different category of weaponlike spells.

Illus. by W. O'Connor

STARTING TO CAST

First you must choose which spell to cast. If you prepare spells, you select from among spells prepared earlier in the day and not yet cast. If you cast spells spontaneously, you can select any spell you know, provided you're capable of casting spells of that level or higher and you have an appropriate spell slot available.

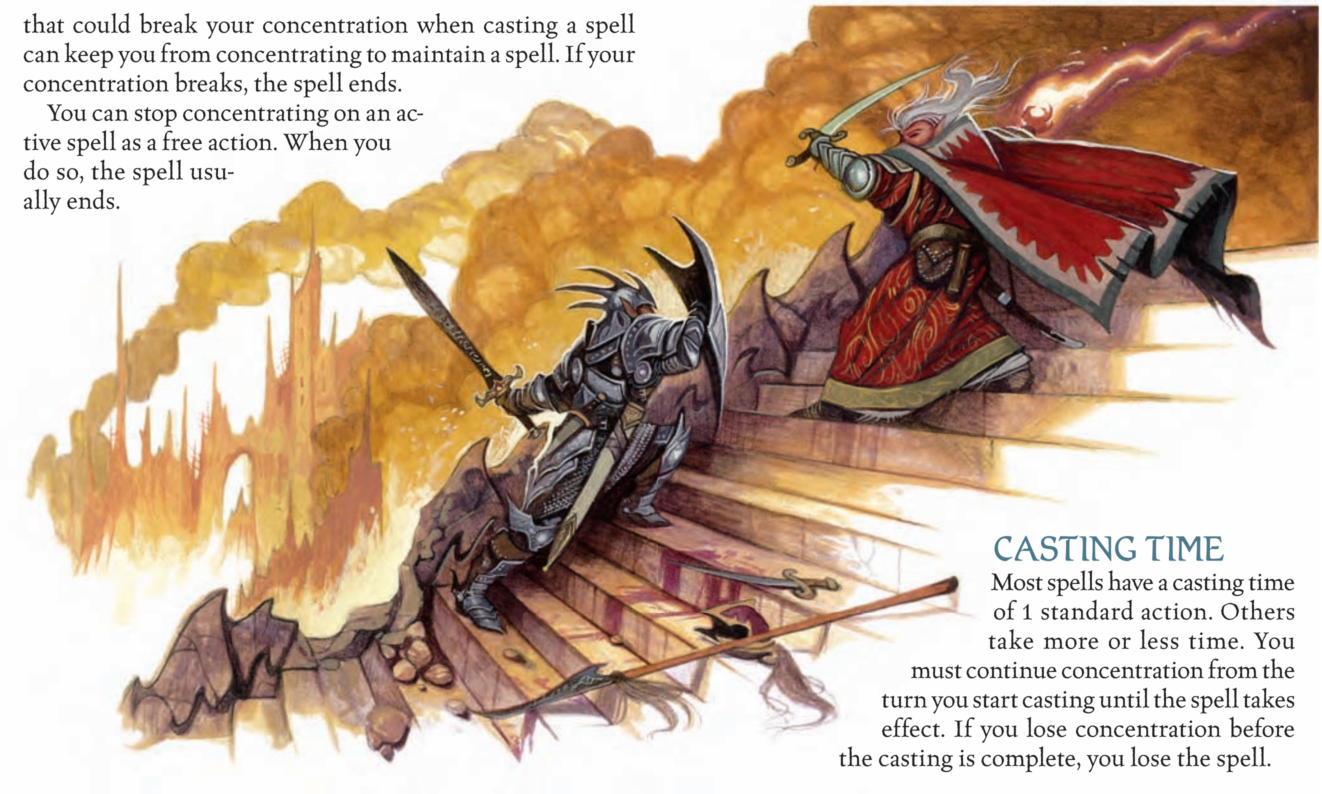
If a spell has multiple versions, you choose which version to use when you cast it. You don't have to prepare or know a specific version of the spell.

CONCENTRATION

You must concentrate to cast a spell. If you start casting a spell but something interferes with your concentration, you must make a Concentration check. The check's DC depends on what is threatening your concentration. If you fail, the spell is lost and has no effect. If you prepare spells, the spell you were attempting to cast is lost from preparation as if you had cast it. If you cast spontaneously, the spell you were attempting to cast counts against your daily limit of spells even though you didn't cast it successfully.

Some spells require continued concentration to keep them going. Concentrating to maintain a spell is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Anything that could break your concentration when casting a spell can keep you from concentrating to maintain a spell. If your concentration breaks, the spell ends.

You can stop concentrating on an active spell as a free action. When you do so, the spell usually ends.



CASTING TIME

Most spells have a casting time of 1 standard action. Others take more or less time. You must continue concentration from the turn you start casting until the spell takes effect. If you lose concentration before the casting is complete, you lose the spell.

CASTER LEVEL

A spell's power often depends on its caster level, which is usually equal to your class level in the class you're using to cast the spell. You can cast a spell at a lower caster level than normal, but the caster level you choose must be high enough for you to cast the spell in question. All level-dependent features must be based on the same caster level.

In the event that a magic item or special ability provides an adjustment to your caster level, that adjustment applies not only to effects based on caster level, such as range, duration, and damage dealt, but also to your caster level check to overcome your target's spell resistance. The adjustment also applies to the caster level used in dispel checks. See Caster Level Checks, page 31.

COMPONENTS

To cast a spell, you must have or be able to perform the components the spell requires. If you can't provide the components that a spell's description details, you can't cast that spell.

SPELL FAILURE

If you cast a spell in conditions when the characteristics and limitations of the spell can't be made to conform, the casting fails and the spell is wasted. Spells also fail if your concentration is broken. They might also fail if you're an arcane spellcaster wearing armor while casting a spell that has a somatic component.

ATTACKS OF OPPORTUNITY

Casting a spell that takes 1 standard action or longer to cast provokes attacks of opportunity. You provoke attacks of opportunity only when you begin casting the spell, even though you might continue casting for longer. If you take damage from an attack of opportunity, you must succeed on a Concentration check (DC 10 + points of damage taken + spell level) or lose the spell.

When casting a spell, you don't threaten any squares around you, so you can't make attacks of opportunity.

Casting Defensively

Casting a spell defensively doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. It does require a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level). Failure on the check means that you lose the spell.

Illus. by W. O'Connor

IMMATERIAL COMPONENTS

Material components for spells have been around since 1st Edition, and for the most part they're no more relevant now than they were in 1978. Still, in a game renowned for its mechanical elegance and integrated systems, material components remain a harmless injection of flavor that somehow makes the act of casting spells more arcane. It doesn't quite feel like D&D unless the party wizard keeps a dollop of bat guano, a glass rod, and a live spider in his belt pouch. Still, I see no reason to keep track of material components that have no actual in-game cost associated with them, and no self-respecting DM should ever deny a wizard his *lightning bolt* spell because his glass rod broke.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

TARGETING

When you cast a spell, you must make some choice about whom the spell is to affect or where the effect is to originate, depending on how the spell works. A spell description defines the spell's target (or targets), its effect, or its area, as appropriate.

TARGET

Some spells have a target or targets. You cast these spells on creatures or objects, as defined by the spell. You must have line of sight to or be able to touch the target, and you must specifically choose that target. You don't have to select your target until you finish casting the spell. You must have line of effect to any target that you cast a spell on.

Illus. by C. Hawkes

Willing Targets

Some spells are restricted to willing targets only. Declaring yourself as a willing target is something that can be done at any time, even if you're flat-footed or it isn't your turn. Unconscious creatures are considered willing, but a creature that is conscious but immobile or helpless—such as one who is bound, cowering, grappling, paralyzed, pinned, or stunned—isn't automatically willing.

Targeting Yourself

If the target of a spell is you, the spell description has a line that reads Target: You. Against such a spell, you don't receive a saving throw, and spell resistance doesn't apply. The Saving Throw and Spell Resistance lines are omitted from such spells.

Creatures as Targets

Many spells affect living creatures, which means all creatures other than constructs, deathless, and undead. Other spells affect a specific type of creature, such as humanoid. Creatures in the spell's area that aren't of the appropriate type don't count against the creatures affected.

Redirecting a Spell

Some spells allow you to redirect the effect to new targets or areas after you cast the spell. Redirecting a spell requires a move action, and it doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity or require concentration.

EFFECT

Some spells create or summon objects or creatures rather than affecting what is already present. You must designate the location where these things are to appear, either by seeing it or defining it. Range determines how far away an effect can appear, but if the effect is mobile it can move regardless of the spell's range. You must have line of effect (page 80) to any space in which you wish to create an effect.

Ray

Some effects are rays. You aim a ray as if using a ranged weapon, though typically you make a ranged touch attack rather than a normal ranged attack. As with a ranged weapon, you can fire into the dark or at an invisible creature, hoping you hit your target. You don't have to see the creature you're trying to hit, as you do with a targeted spell. Intervening creatures and obstacles, however, can block your shot or provide cover for the creature you're aiming at.

Spread

Some effects spread out from a point of origin, which must be a grid intersection. The effect can extend around corners and into areas that you can't see. Figure distance by actual distance traveled, taking into account turns the spell effect takes. When determining distance for spread effects using the battle grid, count around walls, not through them—don't trace diagonals across corners. You must designate the point of origin for such an effect, but you need not have line of effect to all parts of the spread.

AREA

Some spells affect an area. Sometimes a spell description specifies a specially defined area, but usually an area is a burst, an emanation, or a spread.

Regardless of the shape of the area, you select the point where the spell originates, but you don't otherwise control which creatures or objects the spell affects. The point of origin of a spell is always a grid intersection. You must have line of effect to the point of origin. When determining whether a given creature is within the area of a spell, count out the distance from the point of origin in squares, counting from grid intersection to grid intersection.

You can count diagonally across a square, but every second diagonal counts as 2 squares of distance. If the far edge of a square is within a spell's area, anything within that square is within the spell's area. If a spell's area touches only the near edge of a square, however, anything within that square is unaffected by the spell.

Burst

A burst spell affects whatever it catches in its area, even including creatures that you can't see. It can't affect creatures that have total cover from its point of origin—its effects don't extend around corners. The default shape for a burst is a sphere, but some burst spells are specifically described as cone-shaped. A burst's size defines how far from the point of origin the spell's effect extends.

Emanation

An emanation spell functions like a burst spell, except that the magic continues to radiate from the point of origin for the duration of the spell. Most emanations are cones or spheres.

Spread

A spread spell spreads out like a burst but can turn corners. You select the point of origin, and the spell spreads out a given distance in all directions. Figure the area the spell affects by taking into account any turns the spell's magic takes.

Area Shape

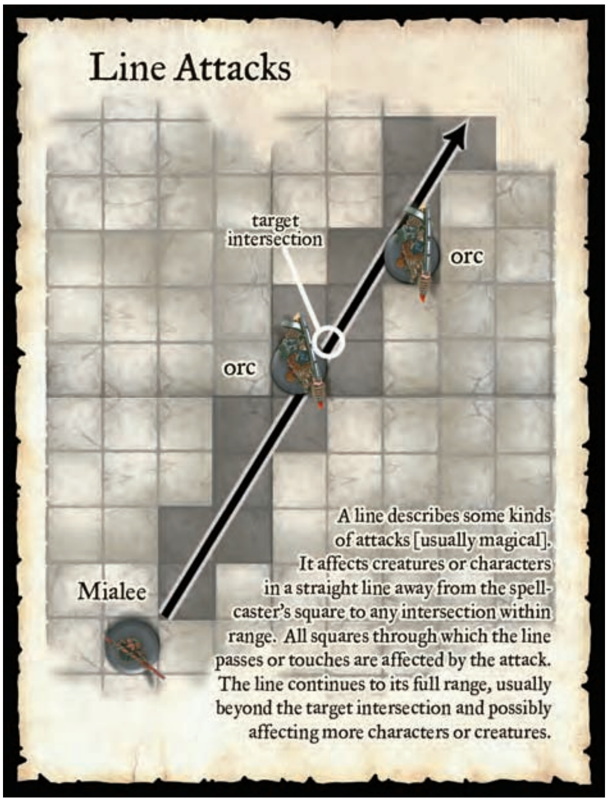
Most spells that affect an area have a particular shape, such as a cone, cylinder, line, or sphere.

Cone: A cone-shaped spell shoots away from you in a quarter-circle in the direction you designate. It starts from any corner of your square and widens out as it goes. Most cones are either bursts or emanations (see above), and thus won't go around corners.

Cylinder: When casting a cylinder-shaped spell, you select the spell's point of origin. This point is the center of a horizontal circle, and the spell shoots down from the circle, filling a cylinder. A cylinder-shaped spell ignores any obstructions within its area.

Line: A line-shaped spell shoots away from you in a line in the direction you designate. It starts from any corner of your square, and it extends to the limit of its range or until it strikes a barrier that blocks line of effect. A line-shaped spell affects all creatures in squares that the line passes through.

Line Attacks



A line describes some kinds of attacks [usually magical]. It affects creatures or characters in a straight line away from the spellcaster's square to any intersection within range. All squares through which the line passes or touches are affected by the attack. The line continues to its full range, usually beyond the target intersection and possibly affecting more characters or creatures.

Sphere: A sphere-shaped spell expands from its point of origin to fill a spherical area of a given radius. Spheres might be bursts, emanations, or spreads.

Unusual Areas

A few unusual area spells have special rules for how the area works.

Creatures: A spell with this kind of area affects creatures directly (like a targeted spell), but it affects all creatures in an area of some kind rather than individual creatures you select. The area might be a spherical burst, a cone-shaped burst, or some other shape.

Objects: A spell with this kind of area affects objects within an area you select (as Creatures, but affecting objects instead).

Other: A spell can have a unique area, as defined in its description.

THE DICE ARE CAST

You don't need to be a math wizard to play a spellcaster. That said, nothing kills the momentum of a round faster than a player who takes 60 seconds to add up 10 six-sided dice. If it takes you more than 10 seconds to add up the damage from your 10d6 fireball, consider taking average damage instead of rolling every time (and don't forget to write the average damage on your character sheet next to the spell name). If you really like to roll them bones, use the following trick to speed up play: Separate your rolled dice into batches that add up to 10, then add up those groups of 10 before tacking on the other numbers. I find grouping dice in sums of 10 much easier than keeping a running total in my head.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

Shapeable Spells

If an Area or Effect entry ends with "(S)," you can shape the spell. A shaped effect or area can have no dimension smaller than 10 feet. Many effects or areas are given as cubes to make it easy to model irregular shapes. Three-dimensional volumes are most often needed to define aerial or underwater effects and areas.

SPELL RESULTS

You make all pertinent decisions about a spell (range, target, area, effect, version, and so forth) when the spell comes into effect. Once you know which targets are affected, and whether those targets have made successful saving throws, if any were allowed, apply whatever results a spell entails.

WEAPONLIKE SPELLS

Weaponlike spells that deal some form of damage—lethal damage, nonlethal damage, ability damage, or ability drain—or that bestow negative levels can threaten critical hits, can be used with precision damage (see page 42), and can be used with favored enemy damage bonuses. Since a weaponlike spell isn't actually a weapon, Strength modifiers on damage rolls and magical effects that increase weapon damage don't increase damage from a weaponlike spell unless the spell's description says otherwise. A weaponlike spell that deals lethal damage can't be used to deal nonlethal damage or vice versa—except when modified by the Nonlethal Substitution feat (*Complete Arcane* 81) or in accordance with the specific regulations of a nonlethal spell duel (*Complete Arcane* 176).

Illus. by M. Cavotta

Attacks

Casting time takes precedence over normal rules for attacks, unless a spell's description says otherwise. If a spell allows its caster to make multiple attacks and has a casting time of 1 standard action, all those attacks occur during that standard action. The caster uses the highest applicable attack bonus for each attack in such a case.

Critical Hits

Unless the spell description says otherwise, a weaponlike spell that can threaten a critical hit does so on a natural roll of 20 and deals double damage if the critical hit is confirmed. Only damage that the spell deals in the round it strikes is doubled by a critical hit—subsequent and continuing damage isn't. If a successful saving throw decreases the damage, the damage is doubled after that decrease.

Extra damage from a critical hit is of the same type the spell deals normally. A critical hit with a spell doubles all forms of damage that spell deals. An energy-draining spell bestows twice that spell's normal negative levels on a critical hit, while a critical hit with a spell that deals ability damage doubles that ability damage.

Precision Damage

Any weaponlike spell that can be used with precision damage, such as sneak attack, follows the normal rules for precision damage with a few alterations. Precision damage applies only in the round when the spell strikes—subsequent and continuing damage isn't affected. Successful saving throws don't affect precision damage unless the successful save negates the spell's damage altogether. A successful precision damage attack with a weaponlike spell deals extra damage of the same type as the spell normally deals unless that spell deals ability damage or ability drain, or it bestows negative levels. Spells that fall into these categories instead deal extra hit point damage in the form of negative energy.

Multiple Hits

Some weaponlike spells can strike multiple times in the same round. When the caster receives a bonus on damage rolls or some form of extra damage (such as precision damage) with such spells, the extra damage applies only on the first attack, whether that attack hits or not.

METAMAGIC FEATS

In all ways, a metamagic spell (except for one prepared with Heighten Spell) operates at its original spell level, even though it's prepared and cast as a higher-level spell. Saving throw modifications aren't changed unless otherwise noted in the feat description.

The modifications made by metamagic feats apply only to spells cast directly by the feat user. A spellcaster can't use a metamagic feat to alter a spell being cast from a wand, scroll, or other device.

Metamagic feats that eliminate components of a spell don't eliminate attacks of opportunity provoked by casting a spell. However, casting a spell modified by Quicken Spell doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

COMBINING SPELL EFFECTS

Spells or magical effects usually work as described, no matter how many other spells or magical effects happen to be operating in the same area or on the same recipient. Except in special cases, a spell doesn't affect the way another spell operates. Whenever a spell has a specific effect on other spells, that spell's description explains that effect. Several other general rules apply when spells or magical effects operate in the same place.

Stacking Effects

Spells that provide bonuses or penalties on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, and other attributes don't stack with themselves. Two bonuses of the same type don't stack even if they come from different spells or from effects other than spells.

Different Bonus Types: The bonuses or penalties from two different spells stack if the modifiers are of different types. If separate spells apply bonuses that have the same type, only the better bonus applies. A bonus that has no type stacks with any other bonus.

Same Effect More than Once in Different Strengths: In cases when two or more identical spells are operating in the same area or on the same target, but at different strengths, only the best one applies.

Same Effect with Differing Durations: When the same effect is cast more than once on the same target, the durations of the effects don't stack. Each effect's duration elapses normally.

Same Effect with Differing Results: The same spell can sometimes produce varying effects if applied to the same recipient more than once. Usually the last spell in the series trumps the others. None of the previous spells are actually removed or dispelled, but their effects become irrelevant while the final spell in the series lasts.

One Effect Makes Another Irrelevant: Sometimes, one spell can render a later spell irrelevant. Both spells are still active, but one has rendered the other useless.

Multiple Mental Control Effects: Sometimes magical effects that establish mental control render each other irrelevant, such as a spell that removes the subject's ability to act. Mental controls that don't remove the recipient's ability to act usually don't interfere with each other. If a subject is under the mental control of two or more controllers, that subject obeys each controller to the best of its ability and to the extent that each controller's effect allows. If the subject receives conflicting orders simultaneously, the competing controllers make opposed Charisma checks to determine which one the subject obeys.

Spells with Opposite Effects

Spells with opposite effects apply normally, with all bonuses, penalties, or changes accruing in the order that they apply. Some spells negate or counter each other. This is a special effect that is noted in a spell's description.

Instantaneous Effects

Two or more spells that have instantaneous durations work cumulatively when they affect the same target.

AFTER CASTING

Once you cast a prepared spell, you can't cast it again until you prepare it again. If you have prepared multiple copies of a single spell, you can cast each copy once. If you cast spells spontaneously, casting a spell counts against your daily limit of spell slots of that spell level, but you can cast the same spell again if you haven't reached your limit.

SPELLCASTING CREATURES

Sometimes a creature can cast arcane or divine spells just as a member of a spellcasting class can. Such a creature can activate magic items accordingly. It's subject to the same spellcasting rules that characters are, except as follows.

A spellcasting creature that lacks hands or arms can provide any somatic component a spell might require by moving its body. Such a creature still needs material components for its spells. The creature can cast the spell either by touching a required component that isn't in another creature's possession or by having the required component on its body. Spellcasting creatures sometimes utilize the Eschew Materials feat to avoid having to use some material components.

A spellcasting creature isn't actually a member of a class and doesn't gain any class features unless its description says otherwise.

OTHER POWER SOURCES

The D&D game includes a wide array of supplements that enable you to incorporate different power sources into your game. *Rules Compendium* doesn't include material from all these sources, since you need the supplement the power source appears in to use that power source effectively. Here are some general concepts that apply to these power sources with respect to other effects and abilities in the game.

- If an ability provided by the power source functions like a spell, it follows the rules for spells. For example, a psionic power functions like a spell.
- If an ability has a type—extraordinary, spell-like, or supernatural—it follows the rules that apply to that type of special ability. For instance, a warlock invocation is considered a spell-like ability.
- The stacking rules for effects and bonuses apply, regardless of an effect's or bonus's source.
- In all cases, any specific rules supplied in the power source's supplement take precedence over these general rules. Here's a list of power sources and where you can find more information about them.

  Breath effects (*Dragon Magic*); draconic auras (*Player's Handbook II*); soulmelds (*Magic of Incarnum*); infusions (*Eberron Campaign Setting*); invocations (*Complete Arcane*, *Dragon Magic*); martial powers (*Tome of Battle*); mysteries (*Tome of Magic*); psionic powers (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*); Shadow Weave spells (*Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*); utterances (*Tome of Magic*); vestiges (*Tome of Magic*).

Spellcraft

If you're trained in Spellcraft, you can identify spells and magical effects.

SPELLCRAFT (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

The DCs for Spellcraft checks relating to various tasks are summarized on the Spellcraft table. Time required and whether you can try a check again are also shown.

Spellcraft

Task	Time	Retry	DC
After rolling a save against a spell targeted at you, identify that spell	—	No	25 + spell level
Decipher a written spell	Full-round action	No	20 + spell level
Draw diagram to allow *dimensional anchor* to be cast on a *magic circle* spell[1]	10 minutes	No	20
Identify materials created or shaped by magic	—	No	20 + spell level
Identify a potion	1 minute	No	25
Identify a spell being cast[2]	—	No	15 + spell level
Identify a spell in place and in effect[3]	—	No	20 + spell level
Learn a spell from a spellbook or scroll[4]	8 hours	No	15 + spell level
Prepare a spell from a borrowed spellbook	—	No	15 + spell level
Understand a strange or unique magical effect	Varies	No	30 or higher
Using *detect magic* (3rd round)			
Determine school in the aura of spell effect	—	No	15 + spell level
Determine school in the aura of nonspell effect	—	No	15 + 1/2 caster level
Using *read magic*			
Identify *glyph of warding*	—	No	13
Identify *greater glyph of warding*	—	No	16
Identify *symbol*	—	No	10 + spell level

[1] This check is made secretly so you don't know the result.

[2] You must be able to hear or see the spell's verbal or somatic components.

[3] You must be able to see or detect the effects of the spell.

[4] No retry for that spell until you gain at least 1 rank in Spellcraft (even if you find another source to try to learn the spell from).

Illus. by R. Horsley

Spontaneous Casting

Some characters can cast spells, but they don't need spellbooks, nor do they prepare their spells. They can cast any spell they know using a daily allotment of spell slots. These characters are called spontaneous spellcasters. Such a spellcaster's class level limits the number of spells he can cast. A high ability score might allow such spellcasters to cast a few extra spells, and the class defines the ability score that governs spellcasting. A spellcaster must have a score of at least 10 + a spell's level in the ability score that governs spellcasting to cast that spell.

SPELL SLOTS

The various character class tables show how many spells of each level a character can cast per day. These openings for daily spells are called spell slots. A spontaneous spellcaster always has the option to use a higher-level spell slot to cast a lower-level spell.

As they gain levels, spellcasters who lack a high enough ability score to cast higher-level spells still gain access to the slots associated with those spells. Those slots must be used to cast lower-level spells.

REST AND READYING

Each day, a spontaneous spellcaster must focus his mind on the task of casting his spells. To do so, he needs 8 hours of rest, after which he spends 15 minutes concentrating or performing some other relevant task as defined by the spellcasting class. During this period, he readies his mind to cast his daily allotment of spells. Without such a period of rest and concentration, a spontaneous spellcaster doesn't regain the spell slots used up the day before. (A particular class might have exceptions to this general rule.)

SPONTANEOUS METAMAGIC SPELLS

Spontaneous spellcasters choose spells as they cast them, and they can choose whether to apply metamagic feats when they cast their spells. As with other spellcasters, the improved spell uses up a higher-level spell slot. Since spontaneous spellcasters don't prepare metamagic spells in advance, they must apply a metamagic feat on the spot. If a spell's normal casting time is 1 standard action, casting a metamagic version of the spell is a full-round action for a spontaneous spellcaster. This isn't the same as a casting time of 1 full round—the spell takes effect during the same turn that the spellcaster begins casting it. Metamagic spells that have a longer casting time take an extra full-round action to cast spontaneously.

RECENT CASTING LIMIT

Any spells cast within the last 8 hours count against a spontaneous spellcaster's daily limit of spell slots.

LEARNING NEW SPELLS

Spontaneous casters gain spells by attaining levels in their class. They never gain spells any other way. When your spontaneous spellcaster gains a new level, consult the class table that details the number of spells the character knows. Select new spells known to fill your repertoire according to the restrictions for your class. Some spontaneous spellcasters know only a specific list of spells, and know all those spells, while others can choose with more flexibility.

OTHER SPONTANEOUS CASTING

Some spellcasters prepare spells, but they can cast certain spells spontaneously as detailed in their class description. A good-aligned cleric or a cleric of a good-aligned deity can spontaneously cast a *cure* spell in place of a prepared spell of the same level or higher, but not in place of a domain spell. A druid can spontaneously cast a *summon nature's ally* spell in place of a prepared spell of the same level or higher. Such spontaneous casting follows special rules for spontaneous spellcasting, such as how metamagic feats interact with casting time, but otherwise functions as normal spellcasting. A multiclass spellcaster can't cast a spontaneous spell from one class in place of one from another class.

Illus. by A. Stokes

GOING SPONTANEOUS

I used to play a wizard. The meticulous research! The careful spell selection! The precision spellcasting! (So appealing to an editor.) And then, for a change, I tried out a sorcerer. I never looked back.

Sure, it's great having access to an infinite number of spells, but how many of those do you actually use, anyway? What happens if you've prepared the wrong spell selection for the day? Nothing is worse than realizing all you've got left is *water breathing* when you really, really need another *fireball*.

Spontaneous spellcasters don't have this problem. So you don't know the whole roster of toolbox spells that might—possibly—be useful on every specific occasion? That's what scrolls and wands are for. You don't need to clutter up your brain with useful but dull spells when more exciting options are available. You've got panache—and a *fireball* whenever you want it.

—Michele Carter, editor

Starvation and Thirst

Creatures might find themselves without food or water, and with no means to obtain these necessities, resulting in fatigue, damage, and eventually death.

A creature that falls unconscious from nonlethal damage due to starvation or thirst begins to take the same amount of lethal damage instead. Damage from starvation and thirst can't be healed, even magically, until the creature has been treated properly (see below).

STARVATION

A Medium creature needs about a pound of food per day. Smaller creatures need half as much per size category smaller, and larger creatures need eight times as much per size category larger. A creature can go without food for 3 days, in growing discomfort. After this time, that creature must succeed on a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Creatures that have taken nonlethal damage from lack of food become fatigued.

Treating Starvation

A creature that has taken nonlethal damage from lack of food must eat before it can heal naturally or magically.

Illus. by S. Belledin

THIRST

In normal climates, Medium creatures need at least a gallon of fluids per day. Smaller creatures need half as much per size category smaller, and larger creatures need four times as much per size category larger.

In very hot climates, creatures need more water to avoid dehydration. In environments above 90° F, creatures need double the normal amount. The amount of water required to avoid dehydration increases by a factor of 1 per temperature band (see page 154) higher than hot—a Small creature needs 1-1/2 gallons in severe heat, 2 in extreme heat, and so on.

A creature can go without water for a number of hours equal to 24 + its Constitution score. After this time, the creature must succeed on a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. In environments above 90° F), the time a creature can go without water before making Constitution checks is reduced, as shown on the table below.

Creatures that have taken nonlethal damage from lack of water are considered dehydrated and become fatigued. If a dehydrated creature would take nonlethal damage from hot environmental conditions, that damage instead becomes lethal damage.

DEHYDRATION TIMES

Temperature (Band)	Time before Con Checks
90° or lower (warm or cooler)	24 + Con hours
91° to 110° (hot)	12 + Con hours
111° to 140° (severe heat)	6 + Con hours
141° to 180° (extreme heat)	3 + Con hours
181° to 210° (unearthly heat)	Con hours
211° or higher (burning heat)	1/2 Con hours

Treating Dehydration

A creature that has taken nonlethal damage from lack of water must be treated with long-term care to recover. This treatment requires a DC 15 Heal check and 24 hours of care, along with double the normal amount of water required per day for the heat conditions. If a creature has taken lethal damage from lack of water or from a hot environment, a DC 20 Heal check is required along with 48 hours of care. Once a Heal check of this sort has succeeded, the damage taken by the creature can be restored through the normal means.

A *heal* spell can be used to rehydrate a creature in place of the recovery time, water, and a Heal check.

THIRSTY FOR RULES?

In a way, the second book in a series is trickier than the first. It is also true that coordinating multiple designers on the same book is difficult. These truisms were never more apparent than with *Sandstorm*. We learned a lot of lessons with *Frostburn*, but apparently not enough. When I received the book for development and editing, I quickly discovered, with aid of co-editors Chris Sims and Cindi Rice, that design had included no fewer than six associated checks or saves that were required for characters traveling through the desert—one each for dehydration, heat, sunstroke, and sunburn. Each check or save (that's right, some were Constitution checks and some Fortitude saves) was to be made at varying intervals during desert travel, at anywhere from 1 minute (sixty checks per hour!) to 10 minutes to 1 hour. And these checks didn't take into account the rules in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* on heat dangers, or on starvation and thirst. While we felt the intricacy of these rules was . . . interesting, we thought it would detract from game play, so the rules were greatly scaled back and made to work with those in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The next time your character is traveling in the desert, think fondly of those editors who made your travel conditions so comfortable.

—Chris Thomasson, editor

Suffocation

If you have no air to breathe, you can hold your breath for 2 rounds per point of Constitution, but only if you do nothing other than take move actions, free actions, swift actions, and immediate actions. If you take a standard action or a full-round action while holding your breath, the remaining time you can hold your breath is reduced by 1 round. When you can hold your breath no longer, you must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check to continue holding your breath. The check must be repeated each round, with the DC increasing by 1 for each previous success.

When you fail one of these Constitution checks, you begin to suffocate. In the first round, you fall unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, you drop to –1 hit points and are dying. In the third round, you suffocate and die (–10 hit points).

Preparing to Hold Breath

As a move action, you can prepare yourself for a long period of being underwater with some careful breathing. On a successful DC 15 Swim check, you can add 4 to the number of rounds you could otherwise hold your breath, provided you start to hold your breath immediately after making the check.

Illus. by R. Spears

Slow Suffocation

A Medium creature can breathe easily for 6 hours in a sealed chamber measuring 10 feet on a side. After that time, the creature takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage every 15 minutes. Each additional Medium creature or significant fire source (a torch, for example) proportionally reduces the time the air lasts. When a creature falls unconscious from this nonlethal damage, it drops to –1 hit point and is dying. In the next round, it suffocates and dies (–10 hit points).

Smaller creatures need half as much air per size category smaller, and larger creatures need four times as much air per size category larger. A larger volume of air lasts for a longer time. So, for instance, if two humans and a gnome are in a sealed chamber measuring 20 feet by 20 feet by 10 feet, and they have a torch, the air lasts for almost 7 hours (6 hours/3.5 people and torches × 4 10-ft. cubes = 6.86 hours).

SUFFOCATING ON REALISM

The suffocation rules are one of the places where the D&D rules make a nod toward realism. Most other rules obey a strange sort of heroic physics (see Falling). But the suffocation rule is one of the deadliest in D&D. Nothing based on your level can save you. When the sequence goes failed Constitution check, 0 hp, –1 hp, dead, there isn't much room for error.

This realism can come as a surprise to players, particularly those of high-level characters. Cory Herndon's thri-kreen ranger, Klickitat, fell afoul of the suffocation rules during a campaign set in the *Dark Sun* world. A massive duststorm had engulfed the entire city, but Klickitat ventured out into the sands anyway. Less than a minute later, Klickitat was dying, choking on grit. The ultimately unsuccessful rescue effort nearly claimed the lives of the other PCs.

—David Noonan, designer

Sunder

You can make a melee attack with a slashing or bludgeoning weapon to strike an object that a defender is holding. Rules for attacking objects that are being carried or worn on another creature's body are covered here, along with those for carried creatures. You can't sunder armor worn by another creature.

INITIATING A SUNDER ATTEMPT

You attack an object held by a defender, using an aimed shot. For doing so, you provoke an attack of opportunity from that defender, provided that creature can make attacks of opportunity.

RESOLVING A SUNDER ATTEMPT

You and the defender make opposed attack rolls with your respective objects. The wielder of a two-handed weapon receives a +4 bonus on this roll, and the wielder of a light weapon takes a –4 penalty. If the combatants are of different sizes, the larger one receives a +4 bonus on its attack roll per size category larger it is. If the held object is not a weapon, the defender takes a –4 penalty on the attack roll.

SUNDER RESULTS

If you beat the defender, roll damage and deal it to the held object. See the tables on page 107 to determine how much damage you must deal to destroy the held object.

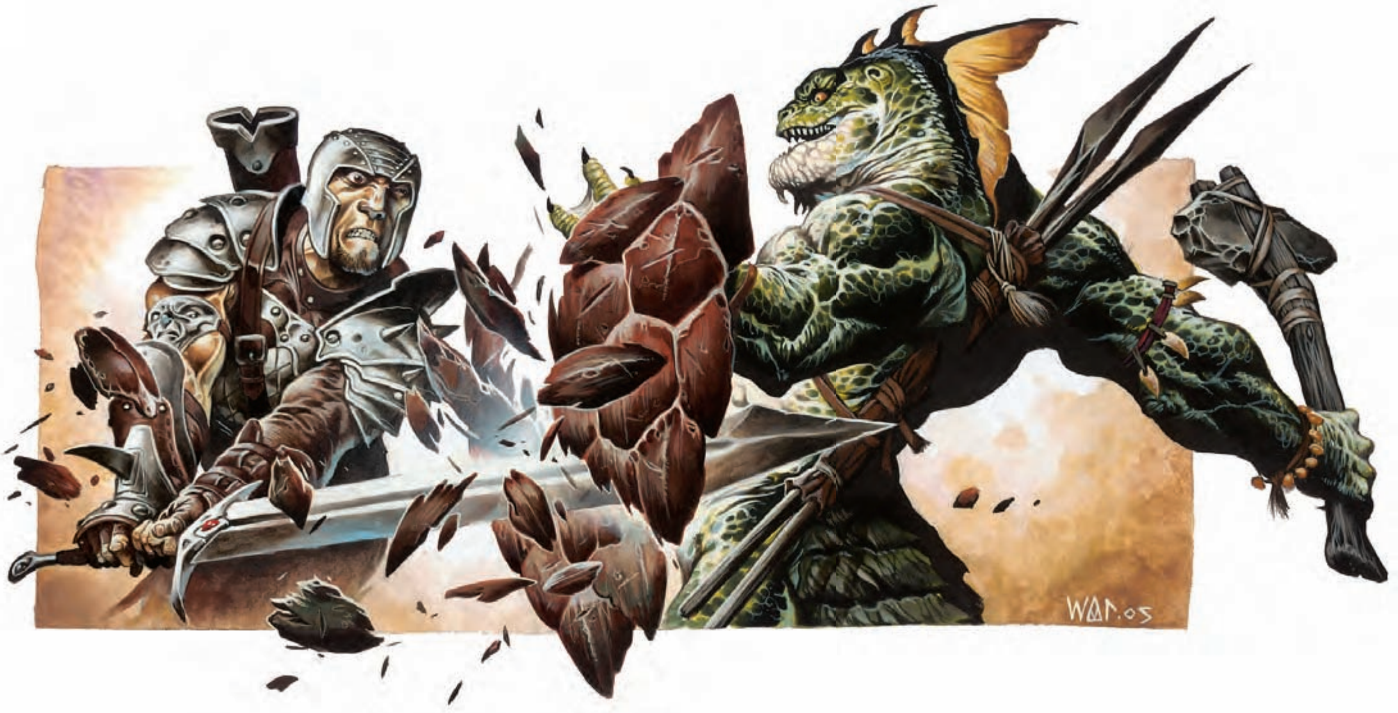
If you fail the opposed check, you deal no damage.

CARRIED OR WORN OBJECTS

When attacking an object that is being carried or worn, make an attack roll against that object's AC. A carried or worn object's AC is equal to 10 + its size modifier + the Dex modifier of the carrying or wearing creature. Attacking a carried or worn object provokes an attack of opportunity just as attacking a held object does, but the benefit of the Improved Sunder feat applies.

CARRIED CREATURES

A Small or larger creature can carry a Tiny or smaller creature, which then shares the carrier's space. If the carried creature is visible to an attacker, it can be attacked as if it were a carried object, including the benefit of the Improved Sunder feat. The carried creature uses the higher of its carrier's or its own Dexterity modifier to determine its AC.



Illus. by W. Reynolds

PREPARING FOR SUNDERING

If you DM a character who has the Improved Sunder feat, get into the habit of noting the hardness and hit points of bad guys' weapons and shields, as well as their unarmed attack values. Doing this will get you used to the rules and reduce page-flipping during play. Also, find ways to challenge sundering without neutralizing it. Monsters that have both good weapon attacks and natural attacks make for formidable foes, while wizards armed with devastating wands are easy pickings for a sunderer (as long as you don't mind breaking the wand) and giants can give a sundering PC a taste of her own medicine. Then, for a fun challenge, unleash the hydra!

—Stephen Radney-MacFarland, developer

Throwing Splash Weapons

A splash weapon is a ranged weapon that breaks on impact, splashing or scattering its contents over its target as well as nearby creatures or objects. Most splash weapons consist of liquids, such as acid or holy water, in breakable vials.

MAKING A THROW

To attack with a splash weapon, make a ranged touch attack against the target. Thrown weapons require no weapon proficiency, so you never take a –4 nonproficiency penalty. A hit deals direct hit damage to the target and splash damage to all creatures within 5 feet of that target.

You can instead target a specific grid intersection, unless that intersection is part of a Large or larger creature's space—in that case, you're aiming at the creature. If you can aim at the chosen grid intersection, make a ranged attack against AC 5. Creatures in all squares adjacent to the grid intersection are dealt the splash damage if you hit. Direct hit damage isn't dealt to any creature.

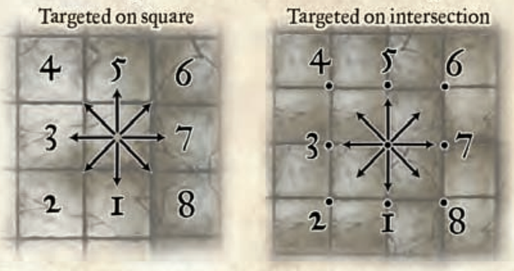
Illus. by W. Reynolds

MISSING THE TARGET

If you miss the target, roll 1d8 and consult the Missing with a Thrown Weapon diagram. This determines the misdirection of the throw, with 1 being straight back at you (a short throw) and 2 through 8 counting clockwise around the grid intersection or target creature. Then, count a number of squares in the indicated direction equal to the number of range increments of the throw. (The range increment of a thrown weapon is 5 feet.)

After you determine where the weapon landed, it deals splash damage to all creatures within 5 feet. Direct hit damage isn't dealt to any creature.

Missing with a Thrown Weapon



When a thrown weapon misses, roll d8 and refer to this diagram to determine where the weapon lands.

Track

You can follow the tracks left by creatures across most types of terrain. To find tracks or to follow them for 1 mile requires a successful Survival check. You must make another Survival check every time the tracks become more difficult to follow. You move at half your normal speed. If you fail a Survival check to track, you can retry after 1 hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors) of searching.

Without the Track feat, you can use the Survival skill to find tracks, but you can follow them only if the DC is 10 or lower. You can use the Search skill to find a footprint or similar sign of a creature's passage using the DCs given on the Ground table, but you can't use Search to follow tracks.

SURFACE

The base DC to track is given on the table below. Other conditions that might affect the DC are listed following the table

Surface	Survival DC
Very soft ground	5
Soft ground	10
Firm ground	15
Hard ground	20

Condition	DC Modifier
Every three creatures being tracked	–1
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain since the trail was made	+1
Fresh snow cover since the trail was made	+10
Moving at full speed	+5
Moving at double speed	+20
Poor visibility[1]:	
Overcast or moonless night	+6
Moonlight	+3
Fog or precipitation	+3
Tracked party hides trail (moving at half speed)	+5
Size of tracked creature(s)[2]:	
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium	+0
Large	–1
Huge	–2
Gargantuan	–4
Colossal	–8

[1] Apply only the largest modifier from this category.

[2] For a group of mixed sizes, apply only the modifier for the largest size category.

Very Soft Ground

Any surface that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints. This type of ground includes fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud, and the like.

Soft Ground

Any surface soft enough to yield to pressure, but firmer than wet mud or fresh snow, in which a creature leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm Ground

Most normal outdoor surfaces are firm ground. Exceptionally soft or dirty indoor surfaces, such as thick rugs or dusty floors, are considered firm ground. Creatures might leave some traces of passage, such as broken branches or tufts of hair, but they leave only occasional or partial footprints.

Hard Ground

Any surface that doesn't hold footprints at all is hard ground. Most streambeds fall into this category, since any footprints left behind are washed away. Creatures leave only faint traces, such as scuff marks or displaced pebbles.

TRACKING BY SCENT

A creature that has the Track feat and the scent ability can follow tracks by smell, making a Wisdom check or Survival check to find or follow tracks.

The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10 (or 20 if a powerful odor is present other than the one you're trying to track). The DC increases or decreases depending on how strong the quarry's odor is (DM's discretion). For each hour that the trail is cold, the DC increases by 2. Creatures tracking by scent ignore surface conditions and poor visibility. Other modifiers apply normally.

Flowing water ruins a trail for air-breathing creatures. Water-breathing creatures can use the scent ability to track in the water easily.

TRACKING INFORMATION

The Track feat doesn't cover one of the classic uses of tracking in fiction. That is figuring out what you're chasing and what the quarry was doing at the spot where you find its tracks. Here's a house rule for studying tracks for such information. You must have the Track feat to use Survival in this way.

Take the DC for finding the tracks, and roll one check to follow them. If your Survival check succeeds, you also receive basic information on what it is you're tracking, such as size, foot type (boot, hoof, paw), and obvious clues (heavy encumbrance, type of movement, combat). If you exceed the DC by 5, you make out more details, such as creature type, specific kind of creature of the animal type, and subtler clues (whether a creature is fettered or crippled, a long pause or sudden sprint). If you exceed the DC by 10, you can identify any creature known to you and even subtler clues (the pause in movement was for a debate or a rest, the quarry is watching its back trail). You can also identify any specific kind of creature native to the Material Plane as long as you also have the appropriate Knowledge skill to identify that creature. If you exceed the DC by 15 or more, you can reconstruct exact events and identify any specific kind of creature (even an extraplanar creature) that you have the appropriate Knowledge skill to otherwise identify. The DM is the arbiter of what information you can learn in this way.

Tracking by scent might give you similar information, but scent is often less reliable for this sort of detail.

—Rich Baker, designer

Trip

You can try to trip an opponent as an unarmed melee attack. You can trip an opponent only if it is up to one size category larger than you. You can't trip a burrowing creature, an incorporeal creature, a swimming creature, or a creature that doesn't rely on limbs for locomotion.

INITIATING A TRIP ATTEMPT

To trip a defender, make an unarmed melee touch attack against that creature. This provokes an attack of opportunity from the defender.

Weapons and Natural Weapons

Some weapons can be used to make trip attacks, as delineated in their descriptions. If a weapon can be used in this manner, you make a melee touch attack with the weapon instead of an unarmed melee touch attack, and you don't provoke an attack of opportunity.

Most creatures make trip attacks normally despite having natural weapons. No creature has an advantage when tripping using its natural weapons unless its description says otherwise.

RESOLVING A TRIP ATTEMPT

If your attack succeeds, make a Strength check opposed by the defender's Dexterity check or Strength check (whichever ability score has the higher modifier). On this opposed check, a creature receives a +4 bonus for every size category it is larger than Medium or a –4 penalty for every size category it is smaller than Medium. The defender has a +4 bonus if it has more than two legs or is otherwise more stable than a normal humanoid.

Balance

If you have 10 or more ranks in Balance, you can make a Balance check in place of a Strength check or Dexterity check to avoid being tripped by an opponent. You take a –10 penalty on your Balance check. If you succeed on this check, you aren't tripped. When you succeed on a Balance check to resist being tripped, you can't attempt to trip your opponent.

TRIP RESULTS

If you win, you trip the defender, knocking it prone in its space. It must use a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity to stand up again. If you lose, the defender can immediately react to try to trip you.

If you're tripped during a trip attempt you were using a weapon for, you can drop the weapon to avoid being tripped.

Tripping a Flying Defender

A winged creature can be tripped, and if it is, it falls as if it didn't maintain its minimum forward speed. See Fly, page 92.

Tripping a Mounted Defender

You can make a trip attack against a mounted defender. The defender can make a Ride check in place of the normal Dexterity check or Strength check. If you succeed, you pull the defender from the mount.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

Turning

Some creatures can channel positive energy, which can drive off or destroy undead, as well as rebuke, command, or bolster deathless. Others can channel negative energy, which can drive off or destroy deathless, as well as rebuke, command, or bolster undead. Some creatures have the ability to turn creatures of other types.

HOW TURNING WORKS

Turning is a supernatural ability performed as a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. You must present your holy symbol to turn, and turning is considered an attack for the purpose of adjudicating other effects, such as *invisibility*. You can attempt to turn a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Cha modifier + uses granted by feats or special abilities.

TURNING CHECK

You roll a turning check to see how powerful a creature you can turn. This is a Charisma check (1d20 + your Cha modifier). The following table gives you the Hit Dice of the most powerful creature you can affect, relative to your level. On a given turning attempt, you can turn no creature whose Hit Dice total exceeds the result on this table.

Turning Check Result	Most Powerful Creature Affected (Maximum HD)[1]
0 or lower	Turning level – 4
1–3	Turning level – 3
4–6	Turning level – 2
7–9	Turning level – 1
10–12	Turning level
13–15	Turning level + 1
16–18	Turning level + 2
19–21	Turning level + 3
22 or higher	Turning level + 4

[1] Turning level is your effective level in the class that grants the turning ability, such as cleric level (or paladin level –3).

Range

Turning has a range of 60 feet, but it affects the closest turnable creature first. You don't need line of sight to a target, but you do need line of effect. You can skip over creatures that have previously been turned but are still within range, so that you don't waste your turning capacity on them.

Turning Damage

If your roll on the Turning table is high enough to let you turn some of the targets within range, roll 2d6 + your appropriate class level or Hit Dice (usually cleric level or paladin level –3) + your Cha modifier for turning damage. That's how many total Hit Dice of creatures you can turn. If your Charisma score is average or low, it's possible to roll fewer Hit Dice turned than indicated on the Turning table.

TURNING RESULTS

Turned creatures flee from you by the best and fastest means available to them. They flee for 10 rounds (1 minute). If they can't flee, they cower. If you approach within 10 feet of them, however, they overcome being turned and act normally. You can stand within 10 feet without breaking the turning effect—you just can't approach them. You can attack them with ranged attacks from at least 10 feet away, and others can attack them in any fashion, without breaking the turning effect.

Destroying Creatures

If you have twice as many levels or more than the target creatures have Hit Dice, you destroy any that you would normally turn.

Turning Swarms

For all purposes related to a turning check or turning damage, treat a swarm as having half its normal Hit Dice.

TURN, TURN, TURN

Turning might be the only core rule in 3e that *requires* you to look up a table. That fits, considering that prior editions had turning tables broken down by the various undead critters in the game. Those tables were part of the fun of playing a cleric.

As a DM, I hate turning. It turns some encounters into yawnfests as the undead just turn tail and run. As a player, I love it. There's nothing like throwing a natural 20 to turn the vampire that's on the verge of finishing off the party's fighter.

—Mike Mearls, developer

ALTERNATIVE TURNING

Turning mimics creatures being frightened by the turner, even though undead are immune to fear. If you dislike turned creatures running away, as Mike does, apply a –4 penalty on turned creatures' attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks for 10 rounds instead. Also, allow the turner to approach the turned creatures without breaking the effect. This mimics James Wyatt's "Frightened without Fleeing" variant (page 53).

Turned creatures that don't run also never provoke attacks of opportunity for running. If that bothers you, consider rendering a turned creature stunned (or some equivalent for those immune to stunning) for 1 round. Alternatively, the turned creatures might have to make a Will save (DC 10 + maximum HD affected) to attack the turner at all for those 10 rounds, unless the turner attacks them. However, only those creatures actually attacked by the turner can attack the turner in return.

This latter situation simulates turned creatures being held at bay by the turner. They continue to be held at bay until they're directly attacked, but they don't have to run away. This can be a more satisfying result, and a cooler scene, than having turned creatures flee.

Besides, any DM knows that keeping track of turned creatures as they flee is a pain. Any player knows that turned creatures sometimes return with reinforcements. Both situations are less than ideal for fun.

—Chris Sims, editor

TURN RESISTANCE

Turn resistance is an extraordinary ability that enables some creatures to be less easily affected by turning. When resolving a turning attempt, add the turn resistance bonus to the creature's Hit Dice.

REBUKING

Some creatures can rebuke or command other creatures rather than turning or destroying them. Rebuking requires a turning check as normal for turning, but the results are different.

REBUKING RESULTS

Creatures that would be turned are rebuked instead, and those that would be destroyed are commanded.

Rebuked

A rebuked creature cowers for 10 rounds, as if in awe.

Commanded

A commanded creature is under the mental control of the rebuking creature. The controller must take a standard action to give mental orders to a commanded creature. At any one time, the controller can command any number of creatures whose combined Hit Dice don't exceed his level. The controller can voluntarily relinquish power over any commanded creatures to command new ones. Otherwise, the commanded state is permanent.

DISPELLING TURNING

If you can rebuke a target, you can use a daily turning attempt to dispel another character's turning effect on that target. To do so, make a turning check. If your turning check result is equal to or greater than the turning check result that the other character achieved when turning the target or targets, then those targets might no longer be turned. Roll turning damage to see how many Hit Dice worth of targets can be affected in this way.

BOLSTERING

If you can rebuke a target, you can bolster such targets against turning by making a turning check. The Hit Dice result on the Turning table becomes the targets' effective Hit Dice as far as turning is concerned, provided the result is higher than their actual Hit Dice. The bolstering lasts for 10 rounds.

If you can rebuke a target of the same type as you, you can bolster yourself in this way.

REBUKING IS COOL

If we ever needed proof that evil is cooler than good, this is it. Good clerics smite undead and destroy them. Evil ones compel them into service. Years ago at a convention game, I played in a scenario that came with premade characters. I had the luck to play an evil half-orc cleric who had an eye on betraying the party. Maybe I had a little too much fun "turning" a mob of undead and commanding them to attack the rest of the party.

—Mike Mearls, developer

Illus. by R. Guay

Two-Weapon Fighting

If you wield a second weapon in your off hand, you can get one extra attack with that weapon when you make a full attack. Fighting in this way is very difficult, however, and you take a –6 penalty on your attack rolls with your primary hand and a –10 penalty on attack rolls with your off hand. You can reduce these penalties in two ways.

- If your off-hand weapon is light, the penalties are reduced by 2 each. An unarmed strike is always considered light, as is an off-hand attack with a double weapon.
- The Two-Weapon Fighting feat lessens the primary hand penalty by 2, and the off-hand penalty by 6.

The table below summarizes the interaction of all these factors.

RANGED WEAPONS

The same rules apply when you throw or fire a weapon from each hand, as long as the weapon you're using doesn't require two hands to fire. Treat Medium weapons that weigh 1 pound or less as light when used in this manner. Treat Medium weapons that are heavier as one-handed for this purpose. The same light or one-handed designation applies to such weapons when they're appropriately sized for creatures larger or smaller than Medium.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties

Circumstances	Primary Hand	Off Hand
Normal penalties	–6	–10
Off-hand weapon is light	–4	–8
Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–4	–4
Off-hand weapon is light and Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–2	–2

MIN-MAX TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

Many methods can maximize the benefits you get from fighting using two weapons. My favorite utilizes sneak attack and fighter bonus feats.

By playing a fighter/rogue, you swiftly gain access to Weapon Finesse and Weapon Focus. Using the same light weapon in each hand, or using an exotic weapon with two striking ends, you benefit from both feats, more than making up for the penalty for fighting with two weapons. Sneak attack and Weapon Specialization get you past the lower damage dealt by light weapons. Taking feats such as Improved Two-Weapon Fighting and Greater Two-Weapon Fighting tips the scales even farther in your favor. I like using weapons with wide critical threat ranges and taking the Improved Critical feat. That way, a larger number of attacks have a much greater possibility of producing a spectacular hit.

This advice might seem heavy on min-maxing, but the choices you make about these mechanics can lead to interesting roleplaying concepts. You character might be a dwarf hunter who fights using two throwing axes, keeping several others handy on his belt. Or maybe she's a fierce human gladiator who wields two punching daggers. Perhaps instead your character is a lightly armored elf fencer who wields two short swords and uses Combat Expertise and Two-Weapon Defense.

—Matthew Sernett, designer

Underwater Combat

Land-based creatures can have considerable difficulty when fighting in water (or any other liquid).

CREATURES WITH NO SWIM SPEED

Certain penalties apply whenever a creature that doesn't have a natural swim speed is swimming. These penalties also apply when a creature has firm footing but is largely beneath the surface of a liquid, such as when walking in chest-deep water, or walking along the bottom of a pool. Such a creature takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and deals half damage, unless it's using a piercing melee weapon or a natural weapon that strikes as a piercing weapon. The creature also makes grapple checks underwater at a –2 penalty, but deals damage normally when grappling. A *freedom of movement* effect allows a creature to ignore these penalties.

Riding

The resistance underwater imposes a –5 penalty on Ride checks.

Swimming

A successful Swim check lets a creature move one-quarter its speed as a move action or half its speed as a full-round action. Failing a swim check means a creature is flailing about, off balance. An off-balance creature is denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, and opponents gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls against it.

Firm Footing

Creatures have firm footing when walking along the bottom, braced against a ship's hull, or the like. A creature can walk along the bottom only if it wears or carries enough gear to weigh itself down—at least 16 pounds for Medium creatures, twice that for each size category larger than Medium, and half that for each size category smaller than Medium.

CREATURES WITH A SWIM SPEED

Creatures that have a natural swim speed aren't subject to the penalties for fighting underwater when grappling or using constrict attacks, piercing attacks (including a bite), rake attacks, ram attacks, rend attacks, tail attacks, or tentacle attacks. Slam attacks that represent full-body rams, such as a porpoise's slam attack, don't take the penalties. An elemental of the water subtype can use any of its natural attacks without penalty while underwater.

Since a creature that has a natural swim speed doesn't need to make Swim checks to move around, it's never considered to be off balance.

ATTACKS FROM LAND

Creatures swimming, floating, or treading water on the surface, or wading in water at least chest deep, have improved cover (+8 bonus to AC, +4 bonus on Reflex saves) from opponents on land. Landbound opponents that have *freedom of movement* effects ignore this cover when making melee attacks against targets in the water. A completely submerged creature has total cover against opponents on land unless those opponents have *freedom of movement* effects.

RANGED ATTACKS

Thrown weapons are ineffective underwater, even when launched from land. Attacks with other ranged weapons take a –2 penalty on attack rolls for every 5 feet of water they pass through, in addition to the normal penalties for range.

MAGIC

Magical effects are unaffected except for those that require attack rolls, which are treated like any other attacks, and fire effects (see below).

FIRE

Nonmagical fire (including alchemist's fire) doesn't burn underwater. Spells or spell-like effects that have the fire descriptor are ineffective underwater unless the caster makes a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level). If the check succeeds, the spell creates a bubble of steam instead of its usual fiery effect, but the spell otherwise works as described. A supernatural fire effect is ineffective underwater unless its description says otherwise.

The surface of a body of water blocks line of effect for any fire spell. If the caster has made a Spellcraft check to make a fire spell usable underwater, the surface still blocks the spell's line of effect.

WATER SIMPLIFIED

Ever since I read the First Edition module *U3 The Final Enemy* back in high school, I've loved the idea of underwater adventures. The problem is that terrestrial creatures suffer a multitude of drawbacks when underwater—enough to stop many underwater adventures in their tracks. Here are some house rules I use to get around these difficulties while making underwater combat feel different.

- All nonpiercing melee weapons and all ranged weapons except crossbows take a –2 penalty on attack rolls.
- As a move action, make a Swim check and move up to the check's result in feet.
- Currents move you at the end of your turn. Moving against a current is at half speed.
- Something must be used to indicate a swimmer's relative depth in the water.

Remember, since creatures can swim up and down, it pays to think in three dimensions. And don't be afraid to throw in magic items that allow the PCs to breathe underwater. They're essentially power neutral in an aquatic game—that is, they don't increase the level of power at which the characters operate.

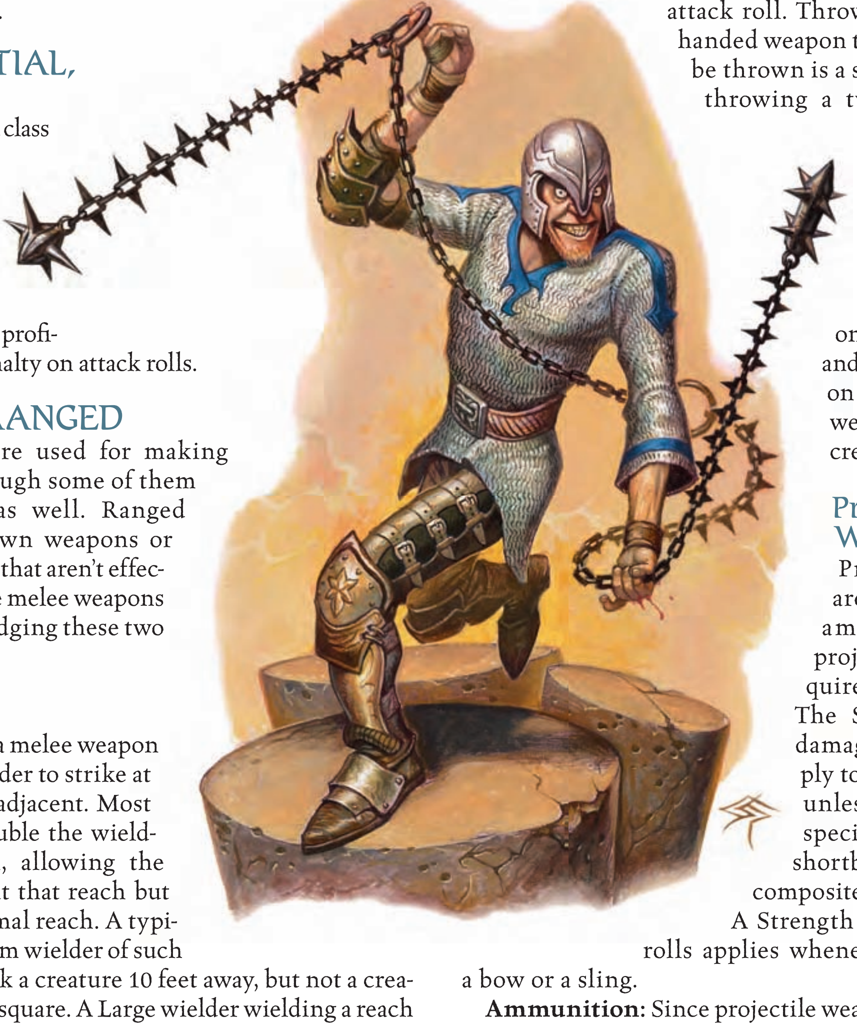
—Mike Mearls, developer

Weapons

Some creatures employ manufactured weapons when they attack. In essence, a manufactured weapon is any weapon that isn't intrinsic to the creature. Weapons help determine how capable some creatures are in a variety of combat situations.

WEAPON CATEGORIES

Weapons are grouped into several interlocking sets of categories. These categories pertain to what training is needed to become proficient in a weapon's use (simple, martial, or exotic), the weapon's usefulness either in close combat (melee) or at a distance (ranged, which includes both thrown and projectile weapons), the ease of wielding it (light, one-handed, or two-handed), and its size (Small, Medium, Large, and so on). Most weapons deal lethal damage, but others deal only nonlethal damage. Improvised is another category.



Illus. by S. Prescott

SIMPLE, MARTIAL, AND EXOTIC

A creature's type and class determine whether it's proficient with a category of weapons. A creature that uses a weapon with which it isn't proficient takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

MELEE AND RANGED

Melee weapons are used for making melee attacks, though some of them can be thrown as well. Ranged weapons are thrown weapons or projectile weapons that aren't effective in melee. Some melee weapons can be thrown, bridging these two categories.

Reach Weapons

A reach weapon is a melee weapon that allows its wielder to strike at targets that aren't adjacent. Most reach weapons double the wielder's natural reach, allowing the wielder to attack at that reach but not within its normal reach. A typical Small or Medium wielder of such a weapon can attack a creature 10 feet away, but not a creature in an adjacent square. A Large wielder wielding a reach weapon of the appropriate size can attack a creature 15 or 20 feet away, but not adjacent creatures or creatures up to 10 feet away. Tiny or smaller creatures gain no advantage from reach weapons.

Double Weapons

Some weapons are double weapons, which have two edges or surfaces capable of dealing damage. A creature can fight using both ends of a double weapon as if using two weapons, incurring all the normal penalties associated with two-weapon fighting while wielding a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. Someone wielding a double weapon in one hand can't use it as a double weapon—only one end of the weapon can be used in any given round. A wielder can choose to use a double weapon two-handed, attacking with only one end of it.

Thrown Weapons

Weapons that are hurled from the hand and require no ammunition are thrown weapons. The Strength modifier on damage rolls applies to thrown weapons except for splash weapons (see page 143). It's possible to throw a melee weapon that isn't designed to be thrown (one that doesn't have a numeric entry in the Range Increment column on the table where its statistics are delineated), but a creature that does so takes a –4 penalty on the attack roll. Throwing a light or one-handed weapon that isn't designed to be thrown is a standard action, and throwing a two-handed weapon that isn't designed to be thrown is a full-round action. Regardless of the type of weapon, such an attack scores a threat only on a natural roll of 20 and deals double damage on a critical hit. Such a weapon has a range increment of 10 feet.

Projectile Weapons

Projectile weapons are weapons that fire ammunition. Most projectile weapons require two hands to use. The Strength bonus on damage rolls doesn't apply to projectile weapons unless the weapon is a specially built composite shortbow, specially built composite longbow, or a sling. A Strength penalty on damage rolls applies whenever a creature uses a bow or a sling.

Ammunition: Since projectile weapons require ammunition, drawing and loading the ammunition is a factor. Each weapon description delineates the required ammunition, and how that ammunition is prepared or loaded if doing so requires more than a free action. Ammunition that hits its target is destroyed or rendered useless, and nonmagical ammunition that misses has a 50% chance of being destroyed or lost.

LIGHT, ONE-, AND TWO-HANDED

This designation is a measure of how much effort it takes to wield a weapon in combat. It indicates whether a melee weapon, when wielded by a creature of the weapon's size category, is considered a light weapon, a one-handed weapon, or a two-handed weapon. This category also determines how a Strength bonus is applied on damage rolls. Although the amount of Strength bonus applied on damage rolls can vary with how a melee weapon is used, a Strength penalty on damage rolls applies whenever a creature uses a melee weapon.

Light

A light weapon is easier to use in the off hand than a one-handed weapon is, and it can be used while grappling. A light weapon is used in one hand. The Strength bonus on damage rolls applies when a light weapon is used in the primary hand, but only half of that bonus applies if the weapon is used in the off hand. Using two hands to wield a light weapon gives no advantage on damage.

One-Handed

A one-handed weapon can be used in either the primary hand or the off hand. The Strength bonus on damage rolls applies when a one-handed weapon is used in the primary hand, but only half of that bonus applies if the weapon used in the off hand. If a one-handed weapon is wielded with two hands, add 1-1/2 times the Strength bonus on damage rolls.

Two-Handed

Two hands are required to use a two-handed melee weapon effectively. Apply 1-1/2 times the Strength bonus on damage rolls for melee attacks with such a weapon. If you're allowed to wield a two-handed weapon in one hand, such as when riding and using a lance, that weapon is considered one-handed for the purpose of the Strength bonus on damage rolls while you're using it in one hand.

WEAPON SIZE

A weapon's size isn't the same as its size category as an object. Instead, a weapon's size is the size category of the intended wielder. As objects, light weapons are two size categories smaller than the wielder, one-handed weapons are one size category smaller than the wielder, and two-handed weapons are the same size category as the wielder.

Inappropriately Sized Weapons

A creature can't make optimal use of a weapon that isn't properly sized. A cumulative –2 penalty applies on attack rolls for each size category of difference between the size of a weapon's intended wielder and the size of its actual wielder. The measure of how much effort it takes to use a weapon is altered by one step for each size category of difference between the size of a weapon's intended wielder and the size of its actual wielder. If a weapon's designation is changed to something other than light, one-handed, or two-handed by this alteration, the actual wielder can't wield the weapon.

A wielder gains no reach from a reach weapon that is too small. No additional reach is granted by a reach weapon that is too big.

NONLETHAL

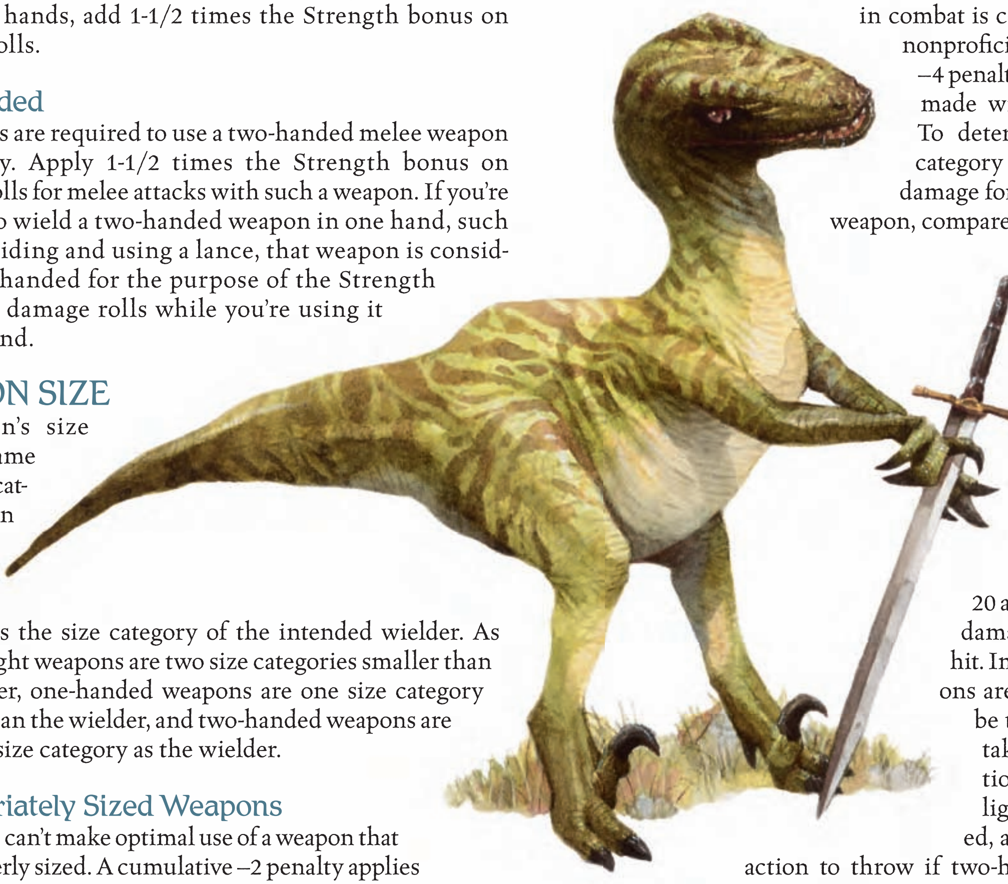
A few weapons are designed to normally deal nonlethal damage. A creature can use a weapon that deals nonlethal damage, including an unarmed strike, to deal lethal damage instead. Doing so imposes a –4 penalty on the attack roll, because one has to strike only in the most vulnerable areas to deal lethal damage.

Nonlethal Instead of Lethal

A creature can use a weapon that deals lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage instead. Doing so imposes a –4 penalty on the attack roll, because one has to use the flat of the blade, strike at nonvital areas, or check the swing.

IMPROVISED

Sometimes objects not crafted to be weapons nonetheless see use in combat. Because such objects aren't designed for this use, any creature that uses one in combat is considered to be nonproficient and takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls made with that object. To determine the size category and appropriate damage for an improvised weapon, compare its relative size and damage potential to actual weapons to find a reasonable match. An improvised weapon scores a critical threat on a natural roll of 20 and deals double damage on a critical hit. Improvised weapons aren't designed to be thrown, so they take 1 standard action to throw if light or one-handed, and a full-round action to throw if two-handed. An improvised weapon has a range increment of 10 feet.



Illus. by J. Jarvis

WEAPON QUALITIES

Here is the format for weapon entries on weapon tables.

COST

This value is the weapon's cost in coins. The cost includes all miscellaneous gear that goes with the weapon, such as a sheath. This cost is the same for a Small or Medium version of the weapon. A larger version costs twice the noted price per size category larger than Medium. A smaller version costs half the price per two size categories smaller than Medium (round up).

DAMAGE

This is the damage dealt by the weapon on a successful hit, given as a dice expression. If two damage ranges are given, then the weapon is a double weapon. Use the second damage figure given for the double weapon's extra attack. Damage varies by weapon size, though the value for Small weapons is given on most tables. To determine damage for weapons bigger than Medium, use the Increasing Weapon Damage by Size table. For weapons smaller than Small, use the Decreasing Weapon Damage by Size table.

A weapon can decrease in size only so far. Weapons that deal less than 1 point of damage have no effect. A weapon that deals 1 point of damage isn't a weapon if it shrinks further.

INCREASING WEAPON DAMAGE BY SIZE

Medium	Number of Size Categories Increased			
Damage	One	Two	Three	Four
1d2	1d3	1d4	1d6	1d8
1d3	1d4	1d6	1d8	2d6
1d4	1d6	1d8	2d6	3d6
1d6	1d8	2d6	3d6	4d6
1d8	2d6	3d6	4d6	6d6
1d10	2d8	3d8	4d8	6d8
1d12	3d6	4d6	6d6	8d6
2d4	2d6	3d6	4d6	6d6
2d6	3d6	4d6	6d6	8d6
2d8	3d8	4d8	6d8	8d8
2d10	4d8	6d8	8d8	12d8

DECREASING WEAPON DAMAGE BY SIZE

Medium	Number of Size Categories Decreased			
Damage	One	Two	Three	Four
1d2	1	—	—	—
1d3	1d2	1	—	—
1d4	1d3	1d2	1	—
1d6	1d4	1d3	1d2	1
1d8	1d6	1d4	1d3	1d2
1d10	1d8	1d6	1d4	1d3
1d12	1d10	1d8	1d6	1d4
2d4	1d6	1d4	1d3	1d2
2d6	1d10	1d8	1d6	1d4
2d8	2d6	1d10	1d8	1d6
2d10	2d8	2d6	1d10	1d8

CRITICAL

This entry notes how the weapon is used with the rules for critical hits. When a combatant scores a critical hit, roll the damage two, three, or four times, as indicated by its critical multiplier, using all applicable modifiers on each roll, and add all the results together. Extra damage over and above a weapon's normal damage isn't multiplied on a critical hit.

×2: The weapon deals double damage on a critical hit.

×3: The weapon deals triple damage on a critical hit.

×3/×4: One head of this double weapon deals triple damage on a critical hit. The other head deals quadruple damage on a critical hit.

×4: The weapon deals quadruple damage on a critical hit.

19–20/×2: The weapon scores a critical threat on a natural roll of 19 or 20 (instead of just 20), and deals double damage on a critical hit. It has a threat range of 19–20.

18–20/×2: The weapon scores a critical threat on a natural roll of 18, 19, or 20 (instead of just 20), and deals double damage on a critical hit. It has a threat range of 18–20.

RANGE INCREMENT

Any attack at less than this distance isn't penalized for range. However, each full range increment imposes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll. A thrown weapon has a maximum range of five range increments. A projectile weapon can shoot up to ten range increments.

WEIGHT

This is the weight of a Medium version of the weapon. A larger version weighs twice as much per size category larger than Medium. A smaller version weighs half as much per size category smaller than Medium.

TYPE

Weapons are classified according to the type of damage they deal—bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing. If a weapon deals multiple types of damage (bludgeoning and piercing, for instance), all the damage is of the indicated types. A creature has to be immune to all the indicated types of damage to ignore any of the damage from such a weapon. In other cases, a weapon can deal one of two or three types of damage (slashing or piercing, for example). In a situation when the damage type is significant, the wielder can choose which type of damage to deal with such a weapon.

VIVA D12!

During the development of the 3rd Edition core rules, I remember seeing dozens of in-house emails talking about weapons and ways to differentiate them mechanically. However, some weapon-related decisions had nothing to do with mechanics and everything to do with aesthetics. Take the greataxe, for instance: Why does the greataxe deal 1d12 points of damage? The real answer is because the d12 wasn't getting any in-game use. In early drafts, the greataxe was tagged to deal 2d6 points of damage, but we needed to justify the d12's existence. In short, our dodecahedrons needed some love.

—Christopher Perkins, D&D Design Manager

Why Rules Die

by Mike Mearls, developer

Removing a rule from D&D is no small task. Most people who play and love the game develop an attachment to all the bits and pieces that make D&D what it is. Each time a rule dies, we risk alienating people who really enjoyed using it. Change for the sake of change is bad, but equally bothersome is the notion that rules are immortal. Our understanding of D&D evolves with every year. Sometimes, a rule has to travel on to rule heaven. But when we kill a rule, we need a clear and compelling reason to do so.

The best test to see if a rule needs to die is to try playing the game without it. If no one notices the rule is gone or, even more to the point, if the game plays better without it, it's time for that rule to hit the road.

In the majority of cases, a rule dies because it fails to deliver enough fun for the work required to use it. Rules that try too hard to simulate reality often fall into this trap. First Edition had a table that cross-referenced all the ACs in the game with every weapon in the game. If you punched an opponent wearing leather armor, you gained +2 on your attack. If that foe picked up a shield, it was time to pull out your two-handed sword (+3 against leather and shield) or halberd (+2). In theory, it was interesting and realistic for some weapons to excel against specific armors, but in practice, it slowed the game down dramatically.

Rules must also promote fun, and the second leading cause of rule death is prevention of fun for insufficient payoff. Earlier versions of D&D placed limits on classes available to nonhumans and the maximum level they could attain. Human characters gained no special abilities compared to elves and dwarves, and such limits were supposed to balance them. In truth, the rule simply constrained what players could do with the game. The old rules restricted fun and imagination in the game for no clear benefit. At low levels, nonhumans were still stronger. At high levels, the DM either ended the campaign, or multiclassing (which only nonhumans could use) kept nonhumans in the game. Humans in 3e instead have useful abilities to balance the field, and then the designers threw open the class and level gates. Today, people play dwarf paladins and halfling wizards. Nobody bats an eye.

Some rules die because they simply fail to meet their stated function. The racial limits on classes fall into this category, as did the nonweapon proficiencies of earlier versions of the game. Before 3e's skill system, you either had a nonweapon proficiency and could use it, or you didn't and couldn't. Determining if a hobgoblin could sneak past the fighter on watch duty was almost entirely a matter of DM fiat. The nonweapon proficiencies were supposed to act as a skill system, providing means to flesh out PCs' nonclass features, but they rarely worked out that way. Instead, they were a hodgepodge of random elements shackled together under the same heading. They failed to adequately cover noncombat actions, and away they went. The current skill system, though more limited in the number of options it offers, is more comprehensive. It covers most situations that call for a die roll.

Although not the most common, the most pressing case for a rule's demise occurs when that rule simply breaks the game. Any DM whose players used *polymorph* to an abusive degree can understand the need to kill a rule that hurts the game as a whole. *Polymorph* was particularly egregious because it turned the various monster books into giant books of PC resources. A DM or adventure designer had no way to predict which critters a spellcaster might turn into. Even worse, monster designers never considered the effects of many of their creations when they were accessed by means of that spell. In this case, it's better to fix the original source of the problem than go back and rewrite every monster in the game to prevent abuse.

Finally, sometimes rules die because we find a better way to achieve the same effect. Prior versions of the game required players to subtract the target's AC from their combat skill, THAC0, to determine the number needed on a d20 to score a hit. Third edition uses the simpler d20 roll plus attack bonus, with the total compared to AC. Subtraction is always a little trickier than addition, and the old system required players to subtract all their bonuses from their combat skill, since a lower skill meant a better chance to hit. In a game with *+1 longswords*, this was counterintuitive at best.

As the game evolves and more rules retire to the great rules graveyard in the sky, there's a chance that today's polished, easy-to-use rule becomes tomorrow's broken, inefficient, complex mess. There was a time when THAC0's subtraction was a welcome relief from the constant table references required by earlier versions of the game. With each passing year, as we grow our design skills and understanding of the game, you can expect this cycle to continue.

SYSTEM DAMAGE

Rules can die spontaneously in individual games. D&D players interpret a troublesome rule as system damage and decide to get along without it. What's a troublesome rule? It's something that doesn't add to long-term fun at the game table.

I get paid to understand the D&D rules backward and forward, and I still have my *Player's Handbook* open to certain rules when they come up. My players are absolute sharks, so we can run big complicated fights, consulting the text when we must.

But a lot of D&D groups simply don't bother. They've made the reasonable decision that some rules aren't adding to their fun, and their game has adapted so that it doesn't use those rules. The aspect of this phenomenon that fascinates me is that it's often entirely nonverbal. Players never have a "we should stop using this rule" discussion. Instead, they see their game grind to a halt while everyone puzzles out the rule—once.

Such players cooperatively make a decision that increases their fun at the table. The more D&D gets its players to cooperatively do beneficial things, the better the experience for everyone. Sure, I wish D&D were nothing but fun, easy-to-use rules, but that isn't the game we have. So I'll happily accept groups of players finding ways around stuff they don't like.

—David Noonan, designer

Weather

If an adventure involves spending a lot of time outdoors, weather can play an important role. Bad weather slows travel and makes it hard to navigate. The table below is appropriate for general use. The DM can use it as the basis for more specific weather tables, since local conditions have a dramatic effect on weather.

SURVIVAL AND WEATHER

A creature can predict the weather for the next 24 hours by succeeding on a DC 15 Survival check. For every 5 points by which the check result exceeds 15, that creature can predict the weather 24 hours further into the future.

A separate successful DC 15 Survival check grants a +2 bonus on all Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to half your overland speed, or a +4 bonus if you remain stationary. You grant the same bonus to one other creature for every point by which your Survival check result exceeds 15.

WEATHER

d%	Weather	Cold Climate	Temperate Climate[1]	Desert
01–70	Normal	Cold, calm[2]	Normal for season[3]	Hot, calm[2]
71–80	Abnormal	Heat wave[4] (01–30)or cold snap[5] (31–100)	Heat wave[4] (01–50) or cold snap[5] (51–100)	Hot, windy[6]
81–90	Inclement	Precipitation (snow)	Precipitation (normal for season)	Hot, windy[6]
91–99	Storm	Snowstorm	Thunderstorm, snowstorm	Duststorm
100	Powerful storm	Blizzard	Windstorm, blizzard, hurricane, tornado	Downpour

[1] Temperate includes forest, hills, marshes, mountains, and plains, as well as warm aquatic terrain.
[2] Calm means wind speeds are light (0 to 10 mph); see Wind, page 156.
[3] Winter is cold, summer is warm, spring and autumn are moderate. Marsh regions are slightly warmer in winter.
[4] Raises temperature by 10° F.
[5] Lowers temperature by 10° F.
[6] Windy means speeds are moderate to strong (10 to 30 mph); see Wind, page 156.

TEMPERATURE

Temperature can be the most important effect of the weather. Prolonged exposure to cold or hot temperatures can quickly wear you down. The following table defines temperature bands, which are used to determine the effect of temperature on creatures.

In the discussions that follow in this section, protection level refers to how well a creature is protected against the effects of cold or heat—see Protection, page 156, for what these figures mean.

TEMPERATURE BANDS

Temperature	Band
–51° F or lower	Unearthly cold
–50° F to –20° F	Extreme cold
–21° F to 0° F	Severe cold
1° F to 40° F	Cold
41° F to 60° F	Moderate
61° F to 90° F	Warm
91° F to 110° F	Hot
111° F to 140° F	Severe heat
141° F to 180° F	Extreme heat
181° F to 210° F	Unearthly heat
211° F or higher	Burning heat

Temperatures outside the moderate and warm bands can deal damage. Those who take any damage from temperature exposure become fatigued, becoming exhausted if they take more damage from exposure (or if they gain the fatigued condition from any other source). A creature rendered unconscious by temperature takes all damage (lethal or nonlethal) in the form of lethal damage. Exposure to heat can also result in dehydration—see Thirst, page 140.

Those wearing heavy clothing or any kind of armor take a –4 penalty on saves against heat-related damage. A wet creature takes a –10 penalty on saves against cold-related damage.

UNEARTHLY COLD

Unprotected creatures (protection level 1 or lower) take 1d6 points of cold damage and 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per minute (no save). A creature wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very cold metal is affected as if by a *chill metal* spell, which lasts for as long as the creature remains in the area of unearthly cold. A partially protected creature (protection level 2 or 3) takes damage once every 10 minutes. Protection level 4 or higher offers complete defense against unearthly cold.

EXTREME COLD

Unprotected creatures (protection level 1 or lower) take 1d6 points of cold damage per 10 minutes (no save). In addition, an unprotected creature must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. A creature wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very cold metal is affected as if by a *chill metal* spell, which lasts for as long as the creature remains in the area of extreme cold. A partially protected creature (protection level 2) takes damage and makes saving throws once per hour. Protection level 3 or higher offers complete defense against extreme cold.

SEVERE COLD

Unprotected creatures (protection level 0) must make a Fortitude save every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 points of nonlethal damage on each failed save. A partially protected creature (protection level 1) need save only once per hour. Protection level 2 or higher offers complete defense against severe cold.

COLD

Unprotected creatures (protection level 0) must succeed on a Fortitude save each hour (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Protection level 1 or higher offers complete defense against cold weather.

MODERATE AND WARM

Most creatures are unharmed by temperatures in these bands.

HOT

Unprotected creatures (protection level 0) must make successful Fortitude saving throws each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage.

SEVERE HEAT

Unprotected creatures (protection level 0) must make successful Fortitude saving throws once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. A partially protected creature (protection level 1) need save only once per hour. Protection level 2 or higher offers complete defense against severe heat.

EXTREME HEAT

Unprotected creatures (protection level 1 or lower) take 1d6 points of fire damage per 10 minutes (no save). In addition, unprotected creatures must make successful Fortitude saving throws (DC 15, +1 per previous check) every 10 minutes or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. A creature wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal is affected as if by a *heat metal* spell, which lasts for as long as the creature remains in the area of extreme heat. A partially protected creature (protection level 2) takes damage and makes saving throws once per hour. Protection level 3 or higher offers complete defense against extreme heat.

UNEARTHLY HEAT

Unprotected creatures (protection level 1 or lower) take 1d6 points of fire damage and 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per round (no save). A creature wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal is affected as if by a *heat metal* spell, which lasts for as long as the creature remains in the area of unearthly heat. A partially protected creature (protection level 2 or 3) takes damage once every 10 minutes. Protection level 4 or higher offers complete defense against unearthly heat.

BURNING HEAT

Increasing temperatures eventually push past even unearthly heat and graduate to actual burning—when material objects catch fire spontaneously due to the heat. Heat protection is meaningless at this temperature band unless it's supernatural or comes from a resistance or immunity to fire. Creatures take 3d10 points of fire damage per round. Those wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal are affected as if by a *heat metal* spell, which lasts for as long as the creature remains in the area of burning heat.

TEMPERATURE VARIATIONS

Temperatures can vary significantly, depending on other environmental factors.

Altitude

Temperatures drop by one band in low peak or high pass elevations (5,000 feet to 15,000 feet), and two bands in high peak elevations (15,000 feet or more).

Temperature increases by one band when descending from low peak or high pass elevations (5,000 feet to 15,000 feet) to hills. It increases by one additional band at extremely low elevation (200 feet or more below sea level).

Day

In many climates, high noon is the hottest time of the day, especially when no barrier against the sun's blaze exists. In most places, temperatures rise by one band after sunrise, and they can rise another band by high noon. This increase is more pronounced in arid regions, with temperatures rising by three or even four bands between the chill of night and the heat of midday.

Illus. by J. Engle

Night

Temperatures drop one band after the sun goes down. In exceptionally arid areas, temperature might decrease by two or more bands.

Wind

In cold regions, strong wind increases the rate at which creatures lose heat, and therefore appears to decrease the temperature. Winds that are strong or greater in strength reduce the effective temperature by one band.

Hot wind carries away moisture, raising the risk of heat-related difficulties. Winds that are hot or hotter and strong or more powerful increase the effective temperature by one band.

PROTECTION

Bundling up for warmth is the most common means of protection against cold temperatures. Dressing in flowing, light clothing and staying near shade and water are the most common forms of protection against hot temperatures. Those with access to magical protection often rely on that. A level of protection describes a creature's protection against cold or hot temperatures. To determine a creature's level of protection, take the base level of protection from either the Protection against Cold or Protection against Heat table, then add any modifiers that apply.

Protection against cold temperatures doesn't confer any resistance to cold energy, and protection against heat doesn't confer any resistance to fire. However, equipment that provides a bonus on saving throws against the effects of temperatures contributes that bonus no matter what level of protection it offers.

Resistance to Cold

A creature that has resistance to cold applies this resistance to lethal and nonlethal damage from cold temperatures.

Resistance to Fire

A creature that has resistance to fire applies this resistance to lethal and nonlethal damage from hot temperatures.

Protection against Cold

Base Level of Protection	
0	Creature with no cold adaptations
1	Nonarctic animal with fur Monsters native to cold terrain
2	Arctic animal with fur Monsters native to the arctic
3	*Endure elements* spell Resistance to cold 5 or more

Modifiers	
+1	Cold weather outfit
+3	Improvised shelter (snow cave, den)

Protection against Heat

Base Level of Protection	
0	Creature with no heat adaptations
1	Nondesert cold-blooded animal or vermin
1	Monsters native to hot climates
2	Desert animal or vermin
2	Monsters native to deserts
3	*Endure elements* spell Resistance to fire 5 or more

Modifiers	
+1	Desert outfit (6 gp, 3 lb.)
+3	Improvised shelter (tent, sand cave, windbreak)

RECOVERING

Temperature-related nonlethal damage can't be healed magically or naturally until a creature gets cooled off (after exposure to heat) or warmed up (after exposure to cold). Once a creature is restored to the proper temperature, it recovers normally from temperature-related nonlethal damage. Only when a creature recovers temperature-related nonlethal damage does a fatigued condition imposed by that damage end. However, a *heal* spell allows a creature to recover without a change in temperature.

WIND

Wind can create a stinging spray of sand or dust, fan a large fire, heel over a small boat, and blow gases or vapors away. If powerful enough, it can knock creatures down, interfere with ranged attacks, or impose penalties on some skill checks. See the Wind Effects table on the following page for a summary—creatures must make Fortitude saving throws to resist effects of wind as show for their size on the table.

LIGHT WIND

Light wind has no game effect.

MODERATE WIND

Moderate wind has a 50% chance of extinguishing small, unprotected flames, such as candles.

STRONG WIND

Strong wind includes gusts that automatically extinguish unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like). Such gusts impose a –2 penalty on ranged weapon attack rolls and on Listen checks.

SEVERE WIND

In addition to automatically extinguishing any unprotected flames, winds of this magnitude cause protected flames (such as those of lanterns) to dance wildly and have a 50% chance of extinguishing these lights. Ranged weapon attack rolls and Listen checks take a –4 penalty. This is the velocity of wind produced by a *gust of wind* spell.

WINDSTORM

Powerful enough to bring down branches if not whole trees, windstorms automatically extinguish unprotected flames and have a 75% chance of blowing out protected flames, such as those of lanterns. Ranged weapon attacks are impossible, and even siege weapons take a –4 penalty on attack rolls. The howling of the wind imposes a –8 penalty on Listen checks.

HURRICANE-FORCE WIND

In such raging winds all flames are extinguished. Ranged weapon attacks are impossible (except with siege weapons, which take a –8 penalty on attack rolls). All creatures can hear is the roaring of the wind. Hurricane-force winds often fell trees.

Illus. by S. Ellis

TORNADO

All flames are extinguished. All ranged weapon attacks are impossible (even with siege weapons), as are Listen checks. Instead of being blown away, creatures in close proximity to a tornado who fail their Fortitude save are sucked toward the tornado. Those who come in contact with the actual funnel cloud are picked up and whirled around for 1d10 rounds, taking 6d6 points of damage per round, before being violently expelled (falling damage might apply). Although a tornado's rotational speed can be as great as 300 mph, the funnel itself moves forward at an average of 30 mph (roughly 250 feet per round). A tornado uproots trees, destroys buildings, and causes other similar forms of major destruction. Tornadoes are very short-lived (1d6×10 minutes).

PRECIPITATION

Roll d% to determine whether the precipitation is fog (01–30), rain/snow (31–90), or sleet/hail (91–00). Snow and sleet occur only when the temperature is 30° Fahrenheit or lower. Most precipitation lasts for 2d4 hours. Precipitation of any kind can produce ice if followed by a cold snap in which the temperature dips to freezing or below.

WIND EFFECTS

Wind Force	Wind Speed	Ranged Attacks (Normal/Siege Weapons[1])	Effect on Creatures[2]	Fort Save DC
Light	0–10 mph	—/—	None	—
Moderate	11–20 mph	—/—	None	—
Strong	21–30 mph	–2/—	Tiny or smaller: Knocked down Small or larger: None	10
Severe	31–50 mph	–4/—	Tiny: Blown away Small: Knocked down Medium: Checked Large or larger: None	15
Windstorm	51–74 mph	No/–4	Small or smaller: Blown away Medium: Knocked down Large or Huge: Checked Gargantuan or Colossal: None	18
Hurricane	75–174 mph	No/–8	Medium or smaller: Blown away Large: Knocked down Huge: Checked Gargantuan or Colossal: None	20
Tornado	175–300 mph	No/no	Large or smaller: Blown away Huge: Knocked down Gargantuan or Colossal: Checked	30

1 The siege weapon category includes ballista and catapult attacks, as well as boulders tossed by giants.
2 Flying or airborne creatures are treated as one size category smaller than their actual size, so an airborne Gargantuan dragon is treated as Huge for the purpose of adjudicating wind effects.

Checked: Creatures are unable to move forward against the force of the wind. Flying creatures are blown back 1d6×5 feet.
Knocked Down: Creatures are knocked prone by the force of the wind. Flying creatures are instead blown back 1d6×10 feet.
Blown Away: Creatures on the ground are knocked prone and rolled 1d4×10 feet per round, taking 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per 10 feet. Flying creatures are blown back 2d6×10 feet per round, taking 2d6 points of nonlethal damage due to battering and buffeting.

FOG

Fog is a low-lying cloud or a mist rising from the ground, and it isn't usually accompanied by wind. Thin fog obscures all sight beyond 60 feet, including darkvision. Creatures separated by more than 30 feet of thin fog have concealment with respect to one another. Creatures separated by 60 feet of thin fog have total concealment with respect to one another. Thick fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet—creatures 5 feet away have concealment. Those more than 5 feet away have total concealment.

HAIL

Hail lasts for only 1d20 minutes but usually accompanies 1d4 hours of rain. Hail doesn't reduce visibility, but the sound of falling hail imposes a –4 penalty on Listen checks. Sometimes (5% chance) hail can become large enough to deal 1 point of damage per storm to anything in the open.

RAIN

Rain reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty on Spot and Search checks. It has the same effect on flames, ranged weapon attacks, and Listen checks as severe wind.

Downpour

Treat as rain, but a downpour grants creatures 5 or more feet away from each other concealment with respect to each other. A downpour can create floods.

SLEET

Essentially frozen rain, sleet reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty on Spot and Search checks. It has the same effect on flames, ranged weapon attacks, and Listen checks as severe wind, except that its chance to extinguish protected flames is 75%.

Illus. by W. Reynolds

SNOW

Falling snow reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a –4 penalty on Spot and Search checks. It has the same effect on ranged weapon attacks and Listen checks as severe wind. A day of snowfall leaves 1d6 inches of snow on the ground.

Heavy Snow

Heavy snow grants creatures 5 or more feet away from each other concealment with respect to each other. Heavy snow has the same effect on flames as moderate wind. A day of heavy snow leaves 1d4 feet of snow on the ground.

Heavy snow accompanied by strong or severe winds can result in snowdrifts 1d4×5 feet deep, especially in and around objects big enough to deflect the wind. A heavy snowfall is accompanied by lightning 10% of the time (see Thunderstorm, page 159).

STORMS

Storms last for 2d4–1 hours, and wind speeds are severe (30 to 50 mph). The combined effects of precipitation (or dust) and wind that accompany all storms reduce visibility ranges by three quarters, imposing a –8 penalty on Spot, Search, and Listen checks. Storms make ranged weapon attacks impossible, except for those using siege weapons, which take a –4 penalty on attack rolls. Storms extinguish candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames. They cause protected flames, such as those of lanterns, to dance wildly and have a 50% chance to extinguish these lights. See the Wind Effects table, page 157, for possible consequences to creatures caught outside without shelter during such a storm. Storms are divided into the following types.

DUSTSTORM

A duststorm blows fine grains of sand that obscure vision, smother unprotected flames, and can even choke protected flames. It leaves behind a deposit of 1d6 inches of fine dust and sand.

SANDSTORM

A sandstorm reduces visibility to 1d10×5 feet and imposes a –4 penalty on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. Sand in the storm deals 1d3 points of nonlethal damage per hour to any creatures caught in the open and leaves a thin coating of sand on the ground.

SNOWSTORM

In addition to the wind, snowstorms leave 1d6 inches of snow on the ground.

THUNDERSTORM

In addition to wind, rain, and sometimes hail, lightning accompanies thunderstorms. One lightning bolt strikes per minute for a 1-hour period. A randomly determined creature caught in the open (or beneath conductive cover, such as a tree) is struck on a result of 20 on the d20. Such a bolt deals 5d8 points of electricity damage, half that on a successful DC 15 Reflex save. A tornado accompanies one in ten thunderstorms.

Illus. by M. Tedin

POWERFUL STORMS

In a powerful storm, wind speeds are over 50 mph, combining with torrential precipitation to reduce visibility to zero, making Spot, Search, and Listen checks, and all ranged weapon attacks impossible. Unprotected flames are extinguished, and protected flames have a 75% chance of being doused. Powerful storms are divided into the following types.

WINDSTORM

Although a windstorm is accompanied by little or no precipitation, it can cause considerable damage simply through the force of its wind. Windstorms last for 1d6 hours.

GREATER DUSTSTORM

Windstorm-level winds in dusty areas make greater duststorms. These duststorms deal 1d3 points of nonlethal damage each round to any creature caught out in the open without shelter. They also pose a suffocation hazard, except that a creature wearing a scarf or similar protection across its mouth and nose doesn't begin to need to make Constitution checks until after a number of rounds equal to 10 × its Constitution score. Greater duststorms leave 2d3–1 feet of fine dust or sand in their wake.

BLIZZARD

A blizzard is a combination of high winds and heavy snow. Blizzards last for 1d3 days.

HURRICANE

Floods accompany hurricanes, in addition to very high winds and downpours. A hurricane can last for up to a week, but its major impact comes in a 24-to-48-hour period when the center of the storm moves through the area.

CUSTOMIZED WEATHER

The rules for weather are designed to model sudden extremes of weather—such as those created with the *control weather* spell—far better than they model actual meteorology. The reason for this is simple: Better weather rules aren't worth the trouble. Clear weather tends to enable fun, and bad weather diminishes it. Most DMs have enough to do behind the screen without making daily rolls to see whether it's overcast or only partly cloudy.

If you want to take a step toward a more realistic set of weather rules, I can suggest two techniques. First, modify the Weather table by region in your campaign world. Second, make the numbers on the table such that the weather on Monday influences the weather on Tuesday. Once you've rolled a heat wave, for example, you should modify subsequent rolls on the table to make heat waves more likely. This is tricky to pull off, because you also want to return the weather to some sort of equilibrium periodically. Whether it's worth the effort is up to you.

—David Noonan, designer

Writings, Magical

To record a spell in written form, writers use complex notation that describes the magical forces involved in the spell. Writers use the same system no matter what their native language or culture. However, each writer uses the system in an individualized way. Another person's magical writing remains incomprehensible until one takes time to study and decipher it.

Deciphering a magical writing, such as a spell in another's spellbook or on a scroll, requires a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + the spell's level). If the check fails, the decipherer can't attempt to read that particular spell again until the next day. A *read magic* spell deciphers a magical writing without a skill check. If the person who created the magical writing is on hand to help the reader, success is also guaranteed.

Once a particular magical writing is deciphered, the decipherer doesn't need to decipher it again. Deciphering a magical writing allows the decipherer to identify the spell and gives some idea of its effects as explained in the spell description. If the magical writing is a scroll, the decipherer can attempt to use the scroll if all other requirements for using that spell completion item are met (see Spell Completion, page 84).

BORROWED SPELLBOOKS

Spellcasters who use spellbooks can utilize a borrowed spellbook to prepare a spell they already know and have recorded in their own spellbook, but preparation success isn't assured. First, the spellcaster must decipher the writing in the borrowed book. Once a spell from another spellcaster's book is deciphered, the decipherer must make a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell's level) to prepare the spell. If the check succeeds, the spellcaster can prepare the spell. Another check is required to prepare the spell from the borrowed spellbook again later, no matter how many times it has been prepared before. If the check fails, the spellcaster can't try to prepare the spell from the same borrowed spellbook again until the next day.

ADDING SPELLS TO A SPELLBOOK

Spellcasters who use spellbooks can add new spells to their spellbooks through several methods.

Gained Spells

Spellcasters who use spellbooks perform spell research between adventures. Each time such a caster attains a new level in the appropriate arcane spellcasting class, that spellcaster gains spells to add to the spellbook according to the class's description and any restrictions from specialization. Spells so gained must be of spell levels the caster can cast. Spells gained in this way don't have the time and money costs for spell's copied or researched (see Writing a New Spell into a Spellbook and Researched Spells).

Copied Spells

Spellcasters who use spellbooks can add a spell to their book whenever they find one on a scroll or in another caster's spellbook. The spell to be copied must be on the copier's class spell list. No matter what the spell's source, it must first be deciphered. Next, the decipherer must spend a day studying the spell. At the end of the day, if the decipherer can learn the spell, he makes a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell's level). If the check succeeds, the spellcaster understands the spell and can copy it into a spellbook (see Writing a New Spell into a Spellbook). The process leaves a spellbook unharmed, but a spell successfully copied from a scroll disappears from that scroll.

If the check fails, the spellcaster can't understand or copy the spell. After such a failure, the decipherer can't learn or copy that spell again until he gains another rank in Spellcraft. A spell that was being copied from a scroll doesn't vanish from the scroll in this case.

In most cases, wizards charge a fee for the privilege of copying spells from their spellbooks. This fee is usually equal to the spell's level × 50 gp.

Writing a New Spell into a Spellbook

Once a spellcaster understands a new spell, he can record it into his spellbook. The process takes 24 hours, regardless of the spell's level. A spell takes up one page of the spellbook per spell level. Even a 0-level spell takes one page. Materials for writing the spell cost 100 gp per page. A typical spellbook has 100 pages.

REPLACING AND COPYING SPELLBOOKS

The procedure for learning a spell can be used to reconstruct a lost spellbook. A spellcaster who already has a particular spell prepared can write that spell directly into a new book at a cost of 100 gp per page. The process wipes the prepared spell from the mind, just as casting it would. If the caster doesn't have the spell prepared, it can be prepared from a borrowed spellbook, then written into a new book.

Duplicating an existing spellbook uses the same procedure as replacing it, but the task is much easier. The time requirement and cost per page are halved.

SELLING A SPELLBOOK

Captured spellbooks can be sold for 50 gp per page of spells—half the cost of writing the book.

RESEARCHED SPELLS

A spellcaster of any type can research a spell independently, duplicating an existing spell or creating an entirely new one. Only the creator of such a spell can prepare and cast it, unless he decides to share it with others.

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